THE YOGI AND THE MYSTIC

STUDIES IN INDIAN AND COMPARATIVE MYSTICISM

Edited by
Karel Werner

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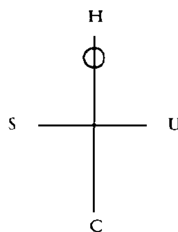
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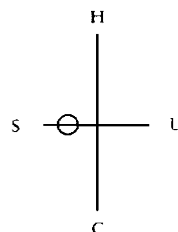
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ABBREVIATIONS

A	—Aṅguttara Nikāya
AA	—Aṅgutta Nikāya Atthakathā
Akb	—Abhidharmakośabhāṣya
AP	—Agni Purāṇa
Asl	—Aṭṭhasālinī
ASS	—Ānandāśrama Sanskrit Series (Poona)
AU	—Aitareya Upaniṣad
AV	—Atharva Veda
B	—Buddhacarita
BEFEO	—Bulletin de l'école française d'extrême orient (Paris)
BI	—Bibliotheca Indica (Calcutta)
BP	—Bhāgavata Purāṇa
BrahP	—Brahma Purāṇa
BrP	—Bṛhannāradīya Purāṇa
BU	—Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad
CU	—Chāndogya Upaniṣad
D	—Dīgha Nikāya
DA	—Dīgha Nikāya Atthakathā (commentary)
Dh	—Dhammapada
Dhs	—Dhammasaṅgaṇi
ERE	—Encyclopaedia of Religions and Ethics
GP	—Garuḍa Purāṇa
GU	—Garbha Upaniṣad
ICANAS	—International Congress of Asian and North African Studies
IIJ	—Indo-Iranian Journal
It	—Ittivuttaka

IU	—Īśā Upaniṣad
K	—Kauṇḍinya's Pancārthabhāṣya
KaU	— Kaṭha Upaniṣad
KeU	—Kena Upaniṣad
L	—Lalita Vistara
LS	—Lankāvatāra Sūtra
M	—Majjhima Nikāya
MA	—Majjhima Nikāya Atthakathā
MaiU	—Maitrī Upaniṣad
MaU	—Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad
Mhb	—Mahābhārata
Mhvs	—Mahāvastu
Miln	—Milindapañha
MP	—Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa
MuH	—Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad
N	—Nidānakathā
NP	—Nārada Purāṇa
PP	—Padma Purāṇa
PPS	—Prajñā Pāramitā Sūtra
Pr	—Pretakalpa
Ps	—Paṭisambhidāmagga
PsS	—Pāśupatasūtra
PTS	—Pāli Text Society
PU	—Praśṇa Upaniṣad
RV	—Ṛg Veda
S	—Samyutta Nikāya
Sn	—Suttanipāta
SŚ	—Ramanujan's Speaking of Śiva
Su	—Sureśvara's Taittirīyopaniṣad-bhāṣya-vārtika
T	—St Teresa's Interior Castle
Ta	—Tandulaveyāliya
TSS	—Trivandrum Sanskrit Series
TU	—Taittirīya Upaniṣad
Ud	—Udāna
Vibh	—Vibhaṅga
Vism	—Visuddhimagga
VP	—Viṣṇu Purāṇa

Vs —Viṣṇusmṛti
YS —Yoga Sūtra
Ysm — Yājñavalkyasmṛti

THE EDITOR’S PREFACE

The original intention behind the publication of this collection of papers was to commemorate ten Symposia on Indian Religions convened annually by the editor from 1975. During the preceding decade or so the teaching and study of, as well as research into, Indian religions on the academic level underwent considerable expansion. Before that happened Indian religions were usually a part of the traditional Indology in the departments or schools of Oriental studies and were, besides, only modestly represented elsewhere, for example in a few religious departments such as that of Comparative Religion in the University of Manchester or that of History and Philosophy of Religion in King’s College, London. These were added to with the foundation of new Universities, some of which acquired large departments of Religious Studies as in Lancaster. With the advent of the ecumenical spirit among Christian denominations and a degree of openmindedness towards non-Christian religious traditions, including endeavours to broaden religious education on the secondary level, departments of Theology in some Universities accordingly extended the scope of their teaching, usually starting with the creation of a lectureship in Indian religions. A similar trend developed, even more readily, in some Polytechnics with departments of humanities or cultural studies, and in Institutes of Higher Education.

In this way some three dozen scholars concerned with Indian religions became established in academic positions, scattered around the country. This, of course, placed them in a position of relative isolation with little opportunity of regular contacts with centres of Indian studies and with colleagues with similar and overlapping interests.

Perhaps it was the comparable situation of Indian studies in Durham, represented by a single post initiated by the Spalding Foundation, which made the editor, whose research interests lay in the field of Indian religions, alert to the problem, and so the idea of meeting annually for discussions with colleagues was born. A few preliminary inquiries suggested sufficient interest for a two-day conference with prepared papers to be feasible and the ‘First Symposium on Indian Religions’, financially supported by the Spalding Trust, took place in Selwyn College, Cambridge, on 21–23 March

1975 with over thirty participants. An address by a representative of the British Association for the History of Religions (BAHR) showed the potential value of this specialized project for the wider field of religious studies and the continuation of the new venture was secured.

The Second Symposium held in 1976 in Passfield Hall, London, enjoyed the appearance of a guest speaker from India, namely Māte Mahādevī, the first female *jagadguru* or spiritual head of a South Indian Liṅgāyata community. She was also the first one of a steady trickle of overseas visitors who found their way into the Symposia—this collection includes a contribution by a visiting sanskritist from Japan.

In a working session during the Second Symposium, when future plans were discussed, virtually no support was found for the proposition that the Symposia should continue under the umbrella of BAHR, while neither on that occasion nor at the Third Symposium (in the University College in Durham Castle in 1977) was there any enthusiasm shown for giving the Symposia an official status by forming a committee with the prospect of founding a permanent association for the study of Indian religions.

It might appear that it was somewhat naive on the part of the participants to assume the smooth continuation of the conferences without an organizational basis, but in the event it proved to have been the right way to proceed. Organizations with their committees sometimes generate more work than the original purpose for which they were formed requires and may even become a hindrance rather than a help in achieving that purpose. As everything remained in the hands of one individual, planning and decisions could be quick and administrative support required proved to be surprisingly low.

The programmes of the Symposia were planned in such a way that the invited speakers were left to choose their own themes, but the convener saw to it that a balance between papers on Buddhism and on Hinduism was maintained, with an occasional contribution on other religions such as Sikhism or Jainism whenever available, and that coverage was given both to the ancient religious systems and to the more recent developments.

During the Fourth Symposium in Mansfield College, Oxford, in 1978 it was decided that a Symposium on a given theme should be attempted and the choice fell on mysticism. The Fifth Symposium in Holly Royde College, Manchester (1979), which received valuable organizational help from one or two members of the Department of Comparative Religion of the University, could not accommodate all the papers generated by the enthusiasm for a thematic conference, and the reading of some of them had to be postponed till the subsequent year. Most of the papers in the present collection came from this harvest.

The Sixth Symposium in 1980 found its venue under the hospitable roof of the Cherwell Centre in Oxford which has become the home of all

subsequent Symposia till the present day and is likely to remain so as long as it stays available and the Symposia continue.

The success of a one-theme conference was repeated in 1981 with the Seventh Symposium dedicated to symbolism in Indian religions. It is hoped that a second collection of papers from the Symposia may be launched by Curzon Press in due course, the bulk of its contents to be formed by the papers of this Symposium.

With the project now well established and unlikely to falter even if the regulars were faced with a need to take some new decisions, the convener announced, during the Eighth Symposium (1982), his decision to retire from his responsibility. Sensing the air of disbelief among the participants he added that the Tenth Symposium would seem to be the suitable occasion for this change. When he repeated his decision during the Ninth Symposium, it was obvious that the message had sunk in and steps were being taken to secure continuity. Thus it was that at the Tenth Symposium a committee of three was ready at hand to start preparations for the next one. The Thirteenth Symposium, the last one to date (1987), had Bhakti as its theme and the level of the contributions would warrant their publication in yet another volume if the reception of the present one and of the envisaged volume on symbolism justifies it.

The benefits the Symposia have brought and continue to bring to those attending are testified to by their steady number, which hovers around or above thirty. Many papers read at a Symposium found their way into respectable academic magazines and not a few contributions, successfully presented at a later stage to an international conference or at a guest appearance in an overseas University, were first read and discussed at a Symposium and finalized subsequently under the influence of the feedback obtained there. This has been possible, because each speaker has nearly two hours at his disposal for the reading and discussion of his contribution, a feature which has been one of the main attractions of the Symposia. One or two newly-appointed lecturers thus gained their first experience of presenting their work to a learned forum and having it discussed in an unusually relaxed atmosphere at the Symposium and could proceed further afield from there with confidence. At an early stage research students supervised by participants were allowed to attend and from time to time one of them was invited to present a report on his or her work, again a valuable experience for their future progress.

The editor trusts that the reader will forgive him for dwelling at some length on the history of the Symposia before embarking on an explanation of the theme of the present collection.

When planning the Symposium on Indian mysticism the editor sent a fairly extensive synopsis of his introductory paper, ‘Mysticism as Doctrine and Experience’, to the prospective contributors so that they could relate to it if they thought that the presentation of their subject matter would benefit

from it in some way, but it was not made a condition. In some contributions this relation is clearly reflected, in others it is not obvious at a first glance, while some were written outside, or without the knowledge of, the framework outlined in the introductory paper. Yet, in the editor's view, the applicability of the structural patterns in mystical experiences and in the mystic paths in different traditions and schools as outlined in the introductory paper extends even to those written without knowledge of it.

The introductory paper traces the beginnings and development of mysticism in Europe from Orphic times in ancient Greece till the Middle Ages, taking into account Oriental, Judaic and New Testamental influences, and shows how mysticism was approached from three distinct angles: as doctrine, as experience of being face to face with or in union with the transcendent, and as a practical path to that achievement. The path itself was seen since medieval times as leading through three stages: of purification, unification and illumination. Towards the end the paper turns to the vexed question of the ontological contents or otherwise of the ultimate mystical experience and suggests possible lines of investigation of this problem.

The next paper examines, in historical succession, schools of Indian spirituality and shows how the basic pattern of doctrine, experience and path can be identified, in different degrees of mutual proportion, in virtually all of them. Next comes a research paper which analyses the oldest Vedic evidence for the existence of an 'accomplished person' outside the mainstream of the Vedic tradition and finds that this often misunderstood figure of a long haired wandering sage was indeed an ancient example of an accomplished Yogi, the specificaly Indian variety of mystical achievement. Even in the brief account of him in the single Ṛgvedig hymn analysed in the paper a path is referred to, the experience is described in terms of being penetrated by gods, illumination is also mentioned and purification can be presupposed since the sage is described as 'a sweet and most uplifting friend' of all beings. His addressing of other people as mortals, thereby implying his own immortality, points to elements of a doctrine which would hardly have been put into any kind of clearly formulated shape in the hymnic period, although even at that time some explanatory comments or more extensive narratives must have accompanied the condensed messages contained in the sacred poetry.

The following contribution first points out that the term mysticism, if applied to the Upaniṣadic experience, must implicitly mean that there is in it also knowledge. This goes against the prevailing Western notion of mystical experience, because of its insistence that knowledge is the result of sense perception plus reasoning. But in the Upaniṣads mystical experience of the ultimate equals full knowledge of the ultimate by higher perception. It next contrasts the Upaniṣadic mystical, i.e. direct, knowledge with Śankara's rational approach to the ultimate knowledge and, in a courageous

sequence of arguments, finds him wanting in direct experience. The inevitable conclusion seems to be that Śankara's interpretation of the Upaniṣadic ultimate reality in the sense of a radical monism is not based on his knowledge of the ultimate but is a product of intellection based on fallacious argumentation and supported by deliberately selective quotations from the Upaniṣads.

The paper of the Japanese contributor focuses on the mythological features which inevitably creep in, with time, to embellish the birth stories of accomplished teachers of mankind, and demonstrates them on the case of the Buddha. This process of mythification could be regarded as an example of the other, 'obscure' or esoteric, meaning of the term 'mysticism', as pointed out at the beginning of the introductory paper. But it can also be looked upon as an expression of the mystical aspirations of masses of followers to whom the individual mystical path appears unattainable and who long for vicarious mystical fulfilment mediated by a pure being from transcendental regions who descends to earth. An innovative solution to the controversy about the nature of *nirvāṇa* is suggested in the following well-researched paper in the sense of viewing the nirvāṇic experience in early Buddhism as a mystical state of consciousness.

The study of St Teresa and Buddhaghosa which comes next is an example of a methodologically sound and cautious approach to comparative mysticism. Without in any way pursuing the notion of the identity of the goal it irrefutably demonstrates step by step the structural similarities between the spiritual paths of these two great figures, so remote from each other in time and space. In fact the structural, though not terminological, similarity between the two reaches even beyond the path into the realm of the transcendent and its cognitive apprehension. Thus the paper, concerned mainly with purification and only touching on unification, covers also the stage of illumination. The next paper is the only one which was not delivered at any of the ten Symposia commemorated, but at the thirteenth one. It thus demostrates the continuity in the venture of the Symposia under new conveners. It has been included here mainly because of its theme demonstrating the extraordinary similarities between the mystical experiences of St John of the Cross and St Teresa of Avila and those of South Indian mystical poets Mahādevī, Basavaṇṇa and Mīrā Bāī, with references to Purāṇic Kṛṣṇa mysticism and the Biblical Song of Songs. Although the author has not written her paper with the threefold basic pattern in mind, the doctrinal burden of theistic commitment on the part of all the mystics discussed comes across very clearly, the mystical experiences occupy the best part of the paper and the path is referred to frequently. Full presentation of these constituents, particularly the separation of the doctrinal component in the discussed mystics' interpretation of their experience, would require further detailed analysis as would the threefold division of the path. In point of the final goal the author

hints at an important, but not yet very much researched problem of tension between liberation from or within *saṁsāra*. The next piece, also comparative in nature, is a refreshingly controversial, non-academic, but well-informed investigation of the value of Yoga and Jung's congenial work in the context of modern life written by a professional man and one-time mature student of Sanskrit who underwent Freudian psychoanalysis.

The modern Indian scene is represented by a paper which contrasts three very different present-day mystics of India and seeks to find what they have in common. In the point of doctrine, they represent a wide variety of possible approaches, from conservative traditionalism to excessive eclecticism, but they all stress the predominance of the experience, even though achieved by a variety of methodical approaches or paths. The threefold division, albeit not systematically demontrated by the author, clearly applies to all of them, although the ambiguity and the marginal character of the purificatory procedures in Rajneesh's case could alert us at the outset to the problem of selection of examples for academic analysis of mystical movements which can be reasonably regarded as genuine. Academic impartiality cannot entirely do away with some kind of sifting procedure which, of course, implies a certain value judgement—a question not directly tackled by the papers of this collection.

The book ends with an article which attempts to single out the characteristic constituents of different approaches to the transcendental goal within different religions and to make visible their overlaps, polarities and contradictions by suggesting a model which would cover all mystical traditions and enable their typology. Although the model had, by the author's own admission, a long period of gestation, its presentation is purely schematic or skeletal with examples presented in the form of catchwords presupposing the reader's broad acquaintance with the scene of comparative religion ancient and modern. The author's expectation that readers will be so taken by his model that they will by their own effort supply the missing flesh on the skeleton is probably too optimistic, but to anyone studying any system the model can become very useful as a tool for the preliminary analysis of terms and concepts of that system and their specific meaning within it.

1
MYSTICISM AS DOCTRINE AND EXPERIENCE

Karel Werner

When writing about mysticism, it is still necessary first to explain what one means by that expression. Some years ago Rufus M.Jones complained that 'mysticism in common speech usage is a word of very uncertain connotation'.[1] That this is still the case is well illustrated by the entry in *The Concise Oxford Dictionary* which defines the term by deriving it from the word 'mystic' as noun, thus: 'one who seeks by contemplation and self-surrender to obtain union with or absorption into the Deity, or who believes in spiritual apprehension of truth beyond the understanding, whence -ism m. (often derog.).' The trouble is that the word 'mystic' has also an adjectival meaning, to quote again from the Dictionary, 'spiritually allegorical, occult, esoteric; of hidden meaning, mysterious, mysterious and awe-inspiring'. The derivative noun 'mysticism' apparently acquired some overtones particularly from the area of occult sciences and hence its 'uncertain connotation'.

This difficulty with the word 'mysticism', though perhaps not peculiar to English, is nevertheless not present in all languages. German for instance has two expressions: 'der Mystizismus', which refers to occult pursuits of all kinds, including those responsible for the Oxford Dictionary's bracketed designation and 'die Mystik', which is reserved for man's *bona fide* experiences of the divine or the ultimate reality, or at least for experiences genuinely believed, by those who have had them, to have penetrated into that dimension.

Why English has not produced a less ambiguous term for genuine mystical pursuits is not easy to see, especially as England is not lacking in authentic mystical tradition. As R. Otto once remarked when invited to lecture on mysticism in this country, 'for a foreigner to come and tell an English audience about mysticism was "to bring owls to Athens"' (meaning 'coals to Newcastle').[2] Be that as it may, it will remain for some time obligatory for every historian of religion dealing with the subject to attempt to contribute to the clarification of the term.

Mystical writings are probably as old as writing itself, but writings on mysticism are an innovation of this century, so the subject is young. It

developed in the wake of the pioneering Gifford lectures on *The Varieties of Religious Experience* given by William James in Edinburgh, 1901–2. It is therefore not surprising that a general consensus on the scope, methods and interpretation of research into mysticism has not yet emerged. However, this is equally true of the study of religion as a whole and since it has not prevented the history of religion or comparative religion from establishing itself as a respectable academic discipline, it is clear that the study of mysticism has a bright future despite inherent difficulties.

If we try to explain what mysticism is, we are immediately faced with the fact that even within its genuine province the word has been used in more than one sense. First, it designates what is described as a direct experience of communion or union with the divine or ultimate reality or at least with what is believed to be its dimension beyond the world of sense perception and rational reflection. Second. it is frequently understood as a theological or metaphysical doctrine, perhaps built around the experiences of a mystic either by himself or others or both. Of these two components, experience is primary while mystical doctrines, both philosophical and theological, in so far as they can be distinguished from descriptive accounts of mystical experience, are derivative. The third constituent of mysticism is the mystical path, a certain way of life with incorporated spiritual training in contemplation, designed to lead in stages to the realization of the mystical goal. The mystical path may be based purely on a teacher's experience and described as such. More often, however, it is coupled with, or at least described in terms of, metaphysical or religious doctrine.

The proportion in which the experiential and doctrinal components are mixed in mystical writings varies and sometimes it is not easy to disentangle them. Mystical writers in the past could not be expected to point out the difference, since only very few were even aware of it; it is only as a result of the modern psychological approach that the two components are now widely recognized, although not always fully respected and correctly applied. W. James did not himself deal theoretically with this problem, but in his lecture on mysticism he was clearly interested only in mystical experience as such and passed over the doctrinal elements contained in the materials, which he quoted, without comment. But he obviously understood the issue well. Within the field of religious studies the distinction was clearly formulated by R.M. Jones, but he then partly clouded the issue by his attempt to restrict the usage of the term 'mysticism' to the 'historic doctrine of the relationship and potential union of the human soul with Ultimate Reality and to use the term "mystical experience" for direct intercourse with God'.[3] It is this very statement of his which is an illustration of the difficulty of distinguishing the two components clearly and consistently. To say that mystical experience is direct intercourse with God is already tantamount to imposing a theistic interpretation on it. It is no wonder then that even present writers on

mysticism, if committed to a particular doctrine, fail to make the distinction and tend to produce classifications of mysticism based on preconceived ideas and incorporating value judgements derived from personal belief or preference.

One good example is R.H.Zaehner. A Roman Catholic, he regarded 'genuine theistic mysticism' as the highest attainment.[4] Two other types, 'monistic mysticism' and 'pan-en-henic' or 'nature mysticism' (the two last expressions standing for the more usually applied term 'pantheistic mysticism') are at best stages on the way[5] if not aberrations of the mind. In fact, he suggested that monistic experience was the isolation of the individual spirit from the psychophysical body which is man's mortal part and since that would also mean isolation from God, it would be a state of sin.[6] The pan-en-henic experience he further explained as the reversion of the individual soul to a state of original innocence (akin to Jung's collective unconscious) and as such neither good nor evil, It would not produce substantial change in man, but enhance only the good or bad qualities which he already had.[7]

Without necessarily questioning the validity of Zaehner's classification of mystical experience into theistic, monistic and pantheistic, it is quite clear that his interpretation of the varieties of mystical experience is guided by his doctrinal allegiance. He did show a certain courtesy when he admitted of 'genuine theistic mysticism' even in Protestant Christianity and also in Islam and Hinduism; Rāmānuja's theism particularly appealed to him as being in agreement with Catholic mystical tradition. But his bias was fully revealed when he stated that only Christians believed in the highest mystical achievement called the Beatific Vision in which even matter in the shape of the body will share in the general deification, and God will be 'all in all' (I Cor. XI, 28). In this point he was entirely wrong, forgetting or ignoring the Mahāyāna goal of universal liberation 'down to the last blade of grass' and the Hindu expectation of universal salvation under Kalki, the future saviour. These teachings have even found philosophical expression in the work of Aurobindo who formulated the goal as the spiritualization of the entire universe.[8] Although few may be inclined to say with F. Staal that Zaehner's contribution is an unhappy medley of dogmatism and emotionalism,[9] the inherent bias of his work seriously limited, if not entirely destroyed, its value and usefulness for the general study of mysticism.

From the opposite side of the spectrum we can take the example of Ben-Ami Scharfstein. Though not unsympathetic to mysticism, he apparently does not accept it has any foundation in objective reality or possesses a dimension of being of its own. Right at the start of his book he says: 'Seen very broadly, mysticism is a name for our infinite appetites—less broadly, it is the assurance that these appetites can be satisfied. Still less broadly, it is some particular attitude towards "reality" and a view as to how someone

or anyone can come into perfect contact with it. And mysticism is also, of course, a name for the paranoid darkness in which unbalanced people stumble so confidently.'[10] Here we can see how the ambiguity of the term mysticism receives a further twist, covering for Scharfstein also the area of mental aberration (hinted at, for different reasons, also by Zaehner, as we have seen). Scharfstein later elaborates on this theme and practically equates psychosis and the 'mystic state'. Yet all is not lost, because: 'A mystic who remains intellectually alert, will accompany his emotional experience, as we may non-commitally call it, by persistent reasoning.'[11] Besides, psychosis is 'involuntary and inescapable while the mystic state tends to be voluntary—given a suitable training it can be entered and left almost at will. The mystic does not suffer his internal ecstasy, infinity or truth, but creates it'.[12] This is not just agnosticism, but a denial of the possibility of any ontological basis for mystical experience. Like psychosis it is held to be only a subjective state of mind and if an objective base to it can be found, it will be physiological, in man's nervous system,

Scharfstein shares here the reductionist approach of some scientists to psychological facts of experience. Unlike Zaehner he does not exactly define his position, but even so he does not leave us in doubt about his stance when he says: 'I myself dislike and prefer to explain away much of mysticism, but it is in some way essential to us and it is too natively human ever to die.'[13] His often witty and lighthearted yet penetrating remarks make a sober summary of his actual views difficult, but I think that if we try to produce one we shall find that his stance can be described as evolutionary positivism and formulated thus: Emotional experiences have a certain realistic value, though not a basis in objective reality, in so far as they prove of assistance for the survival and evolution of the species. Thus the human emotion of love secures, better than mere instinct, procreation and the protracted care of offspring, enabling humans to develop higher intelligence on maturity. The emotional experience of oneness could in this way be interpreted as a future further stage of evolution which would replace strife, a one-time stimulant of evolution which has become too destructive, if mystical experience were to become an achievement of a substantial part of mankind or at least of a large élite which could command the respect of the rest.

Although this view incorporates a preconceived positivistic bias, it does have a worthwhile implication, for if our summary of Scharfstein's line of thought expresses correctly the logic of the positivistic approach, then scientific and wider academic research interest must sooner or later include mysticism not only as a phenomenon or an object of study, but also as a method of research. In other words the researcher studying mysticism would adopt some kind of mystical practice. This approach is also advocated by Staal who says: The study of mysticism, to the extent that it has so far been undertaken, resembles the sketching of a territory that is

never visited and only described from hearsay.'[14] 'If mysticism is to be studied seriously, it should not merely be studied indirectly and from without, but also directly and from within.' Without this provision it would be 'like a blind man studying vision.'[15] I have expressed a similar view with respect to Yoga when advocating for it, in the context of the modern world, the status of a 'new field of inquiry both in scientific laboratories and in the laboratory of the human mind', the latter implying 'the experimenter's use and application of the Yoga method on a personal basis, not only by the study of its results on other subjects'.[16]

All modern writers on mysticism include within its range traditions belonging to different times and parts of the world. But its concept has been formed in the context of European civilization which has its roots in ancient Greece, drew substantially from Judaic tradition and was basically Christian before it underwent the process of secularization. It is therefore inevitable that in a paper like this one turns also to history.

The origin of mysticism has to be sought in the mystery cults of prehistoric Greece which survived well into the historical period and penetrated later into Rome. Since they were secret, not much is known about them. But in general one can say that some kind of mystical experience was evoked by rites of initiation into the mysteries and on special occasions various ecstasy-inducing techniques were used such as sacred movements and dances, recitations and enigmatic utterances. There were also enactments of sacred events ('mystery plays'). The application of these techniques was often preceded by periods of fasting and chastity. There are also reports of individuals who achieved 'union with the deity' and the god, it was believed, spoke through them, giving prophecies.[17]

Besides the component of mystical experience and the methods of bringing it about, the mysteries already had their doctrinal element also. Since a fair deal is known about the mystery doctrines, they may not have been as secret as the rites, if they were secret at all. While the initiatory rites and ecstasy-inducing techniques probably relied also on the effect of novelty, surprise and awe, the teachings provided the motivation for joining the mystery movement, for undergoing purifications and perhaps for adopting, temporarily or permanently, a stringent discipline in life. The teachings of mysteries can be described as ethical, eschatological and soteriological.[18] In the atmosphere of life's uncertainties in those rough times and in the face of the gloomy prospects, in the then current Greek religion, of a shadowy Hades after death, the outlook of rich rewards in the afterlife, a favourable lot in future lives on earth and the possibility of final rebirth into immortality represented highly desirable achievements, attracting mentally alert candidates and furthering their experiences of ecstasy during the sacred rites.

The exact state of elaboration of the mystery doctrines is not known, but they influenced philosophers, some of whom were initiated and

incorporated mystery doctrines into their teachings. As philosophy was not yet a purely academic discipline they also lived it practically, sometimes together with their disciples in monastic communities. Two pre-Socratics have to be mentioned in this context. Pythagoras, who left Samos for Crotona in southern Italy in 530 B.C., was described by B. Russell as a combination of Einstein and Mrs Eddy. He was probably initiated into Orphic mysteries and it may be worth mentioning that it was suggested that he had come from India, his name being explained as a hellenization of the Sanskrit *pitā gurus* (= father teacher).[19] He was the contemporary of the Buddha and one of his utterances, 'There are men and gods and beings like Pythagoras',[20] suggests that he regarded the expression 'Pythagoras' as a designation for a special category of beings rather than a personal name which is reminiscent of the usage of the term *buddha* in the texts of both early and Mahāyāna Buddhism. Several passages in the Buddha's discourses related in the Pāli Canon resemble the above statement. In one of them (M 4, 36) when a priest who saw unusual signs about the Buddha asked if he was a god, a man, a ghost etc., he answered each time in the negative. To the direct question who, then, he was, he retorted he was a *buddha* (= an enlightened one). Pythagoras taught metempsychosis as did the Orphics as well as the Buddha and other Indian teachers. The soul fared well or badly in the cycle of lives alternating between the underworld and this world according to its moral merits and state of purity. Eventually salvation could be won by bringing about complete harmony in the purified soul by means of philosophical contemplation in which the perception of harmony in music, in the cosmos and in mathematical relations played an important part. Like the Buddha, and other Indian *gurus*, Pythagoras founded a community of followers abiding by regulations designed to facilitate a pure and contemplative life.

Empedocles of Agrigentum (*c.* 483–23 B.C.), also an Orphic initiate, apparently knew the teachings of Pythagoras. He regarded himself as a fallen god who had had to go through various incarnations to regain the divine status which he accomplished in his last life. His reported death in the fiery Etna, though more spectacular, would be in keeping with the taste of contemporary Indian saints, and particularly those of Jain persuasion, for death in flames on reaching enlightenment and seeing their life's task accomplished (though some preferred starving to death). Empedocles does not seem to have added anything substantially new to what we know of Orphic and Pythagorian teachings, but he still makes an impressive figure. Plato drew from all three mentioned sources.

Although we do not know whether Plato (427–347 B.C.) was a practising mystic, there was enough mysticism in his philosophy for it to become the basis of medieval mystical doctrine. To what degree Socrates (469–399 B.C.) contributed to it is a long-standing problem, but he may himself have been a practising mystic. He was known to enter into states of deep contemplation,

lasting even for hours, in which he completely ceased to communicate with his environment. Plato might have followed his teacher's example, though he would have done it less conspicuously.

The basis of the mystical doctrine which Plato provided was his vision of a hierarchically ordered spiritual universe. The one ultimate reality was the idea of good and below it, proceeding from one to many, are the other subordinate ideas or forms, forces and laws of the ideal world of which the phenomenal world of passing things and events is only a shadowy reflection. Finding it difficult to express his system in precise terms, Plato often resorted to poetical myths. Although his philosophy has endured for centuries with many works written in its spirit or trying to explain it, it is still poetry which even today is best able to convey to us the mystic flavour of Plato's philosophy, like Shelley's famous verse:

> The One remains, the many change and pass;
> The light of heavens abides, earth's shadows fly;
> Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass
> Stains the white radiance of eternity…[21]

Plato's idea of the good as the absolute to which men's souls would aspire and make cognitive approaches in contemplation did not prove sufficiently evocative emotionally for the purpose of mysticism as practice. After all, the mystery cults had always centred their rites and teachings around a god-figure. But Olympic god-figures were becoming outdated and mystery religions needed a more philosophical concept of god. This was provided, paradoxically if not ironically, by Aristotle (384–22 B.C.), for whom God was a necessary deduction in his process of reasoning. Viewing the world as real, he saw it as consisting of a hierarchy of actual substances which required a 'prime mover' to set and keep the world going. But being pure form, God does not do the moving himself; he is the object of desire of lower substances which move to achieve perfection since God is perfection itself. Psychologically God seems to be something like pure mind and contemplates his own perfection, which may also mean the perfection of all things.[22] Since 'there is something divine in man', man also has the capacity for contemplation and can rise to the supreme act of vision (*theoria*) akin to God's, if he so chooses, for he is free and may determine his own direction in life.[23] It is clear that Aristotle's *theoria* is far from what we mean by 'theory' today and it is difficult to imagine that he developed his ideas about God purely by reasoning. I think that some measure of mystical practice of contemplation must be assumed in his life. On the other hand, he supplied all the rational arguments for the acceptance of the necessity of God for many people throughout the centuries till the present day and influenced in the same way also the mystical doctrine which enabled

mysticism to flourish under dogmatic religous systems. Both Christianity and Islam made use of this opportunity.

Mysticism furthermore profited from the vacuity of Aristotle’s idea of God in a far superior way. It enabled advanced mystics to transcend the all too concrete, even human features of the Christian God and allowed them even in the climate of a strict theistic religion to point beyond the limiting idea of a personal God through the method which became known as *via negativa*. God is beyond the concrete and beyond the finite; any characteristic ascribed to him would be a limitation; he is not this and not that.

A further contribution to mystical teachings came from Stoicism in its concept of an immanent Spirit present both in the world as its soul and in man as a seed of God in his soul, but it was Neoplatonism which became the real foundation of mysticism. Starting as a metaphysical teaching, it became eventually a kind of magic religion, trying to rival Christianity. It failed as religion, but won as philosophy, though translated into Christian terms.[24] The creator of the Neoplatonic system, Plotinus (A.D. 203–70) is reported to have travelled far into the East ‘to familiarise himself with Indian wisdom’.[25] The name of his teacher, Ammonios Sakkas, sounds like a deliberate reversal of the name ‘Śakyamuni’ (i.e. the sage from the Śakya clan) under which the Buddha was known in India, to begin with outside the circle of his followers and later also in the Mahāyāna sources.

In the teachings of Plotinus we again meet Plato’s hierarchical structure of being, but it is expressed in a more systematic and conceptually more accurate way, as is to be expected in post-Aristotelian times. At the top is the One or Above-Being, at the bottom matter or non-being. Both are unthinkable, indeterminable, formless, without quality and quantity, but the One is perfect and dynamic, while matter is deficient and passive. Being is a flow from Above-Being to non-being through three descending stages. The first, that of the Spirit, is the intelligible world of pure forms, Ideas or archetypes of things. The second is the stage of the soul—the world-soul and individual souls. The third is the stage of nature, which receives life from the world-soul, and of beings in the world of nature which receive life from individual souls. As in all metaphysical teachings, the reason for the process of emanation from Above-Being to non-being, the One to the many, remains obscure, despite abounding explanations. But reasons for the ascent to be desired are clear. The soul can sometimes look upwards, and seeing the world of spirit realizes its condition as imprisonment in the body and even becomes ashamed of the body. Since the One, frequently also called God by Plotinus, is the centre of the soul, it is possible to find one’s way to it in ecstatic unification. According to Porphyry, Plotinus experienced this state four times during his life. Before his death he said to a friend he would try to achieve it for ever.

Although Plotinus was occupied all his life in teaching and writing down his philosophy, it was not for him an end in itself, but the way to the One. Philosophical speculation was prompted and inspired by the One and was therefore the starting point of the journey to it. The starting point of the speculation itself is not arbitrary, but is determined, as Jaspers put it when writing about Plotinus, 'by the experience of our reality'. In the course of speculative thinking based on our experience a process of transcending is initiated so that thought approaches what can be called contemplation of the archetypal or the spiritual. Eventually the mind arrives at contemplation of the One and recognizes it as its origin and this fills it with joy.[26] In this interpretation we can see how the process of formulating a doctrine initiates the mystical path and how the practical steps on, and the completion of, the mystical path in turn inform the doctrine. Doctrine and experience go here hand in hand and since the experience transcends the world of nature and mere speculation, the concepts used for the doctrinal formulations become more and more vacuous and the highest is called by the entirely nondescriptive term 'the One'.

Besides its links to Plato and Aristotle, the mystical system of Piotinus has clear and congenial parallels only in India where the idea of the One beyond being and non-being, from which emanate becoming and further stages of manifested reality by virtue of its inner dynamism, was first expressed in a hymn of the Ṛg Veda (10, 129) before 1000 B.C.[27] The hierarchical structure of the existential planes of the spiritual and material universe appears in different elaborations both in Hindu and Buddhist systems and the One again reappears as the only truly existing reality called *brahman* in Hindu Vedāntism and *śūnyatā* ('emptiness' or 'voidness') in Mahāyāna Buddhism. Its experience reached in contemplation is described as the unity of being, knowing and bliss by the former and as enlightenment by the latter.

With Plotinus all that philosophy could do for mysticism had been done, but most (though by no means all) people need religion to start them off and Neoplatonism tried to meet this need, but it did it incongruously and unsuccessfully. However, there was one great successor of Plotinus, namely Proclus (A.D. 410–85), important for the transmission of the system to Christianity in a modified form. He described the emanation process from the One to lower planes as proceeding in triads. As in Plotinus, the human soul in Proclus' view always has the choice open to it of withdrawing into its inner sanctuary to find God, who is immanent to it though transcendent to the world. He describes this experience as *enthousiasmos*, i.e. as being possessed by God, and in the Socratic or Platonic way as a kind of divine madness. Proclus directly influenced pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita (*c.* A.D. 500), the father of Christian mysticism.

But before this, mystical tendencies of early Christianity, informed also by the Judaic tradition which in turn drew at that time from Hellenistic

sources, developed into what came to be known as 'mystical theology'. This term originally meant 'direct, secret and incommunicable knowledge of God received in contemplation, as opposed to "natural theology", the knowledge of God obtained through creatures, and "dogmatic theology", the knowledge of God by revelation'.[28] We can, I think, understand mystical theology as mystical experience developed in the context and therefore interpreted in the light of dogmatic theology based on faith in a theistic revelation. Theism can therefore be regarded as its doctrinal admixture.

Judaic mysticism goes back to the experiences of the prophets who claimed direct communion with God. Psalms and other books of the Old Testament are full of mystical allusions. However, by the time of Christ its stream seems to have dried up and the mystical philosophy of Philo of Alexandria (*c.* 20 B.C.–A.D. 50) used Platonic inspiration to interpret Old Testamental mystical experience and to explain philosophically the process of creation. In it Logos is the mediator between God and man. Logos is the divine power of creation, the idea of ideas, the paradigm and the archetype. Having a double nature, Logos dwells in all single ideas of the ideal world. which is in fact the mind of God who thinks those ideas, as well as in the single things of the perceived world. Although an infinite power of an infinite God, Logos is also a person, an archangel, the first-born son of God and his agent in the world, acting as helper, advocate and intercessor of men. Man is capable of contemplation when leading a quiet 'theoretical' life. Then he can obtain an inner revelation in mystical ecstasy which is higher than Biblical revelation. In this ecstasy human consciousness is darkened and even obliterated by the experience of the proximity of God or even union with him. Philo influenced the developing Christianity and its theology as well as mysticism. He was also, in a way, a predecessor of Plotinus.

Like the prophets of Israel, Christ can be seen as a mystic who expressed his experience of union with the ultimate reality in terms of his unity with God as father. The experience of the presence of God appears to have been a frequent phenomenon in the gatherings of early Christians and it can be classified as mystical, though it was apparently the charismatic influence of the person of Christ which prompted it rather than a doctrine and some special method, prayer being the only preparation for it. St Paul's conversion accompanied by a vision of light is another instance of spontaneous mystical experience under the charismatic influence of Christ's personality. But as the Master became more remote in time, his charisma gradually lost its immediacy and the time came when the Christian doctrine started taking over and getting more elaborate. With it started also the mystical doctrine and with it more definite forms of contemplation were now needed to bring about the mystical experience. Some individuals with a strong mystical sense followed a solitary ascetic path and founded the tradition of desert hermits.

The forming of mystical theology or the Christian way of mystical experience crystallized in the atmosphere of Neoplatonic religion and Gnostic teachings, but was firmly rooted in the Christian religion whose foundation was faith. The idea of *gnosis* (= knowledge) was developed in conscious contradistinction to the phenomenon of strong religious faith (*pistis*). This distinction was not clearly seen before and is even today frequently obscured: believers often insist on having knowledge through faith. But *gnosis* was understood as real knowledge like that gained by the senses, albeit on a suprasensory level and concerning suprasensory matters. It was also higher than knowledge gained by mere reflection or inference, though reflection was used to formulate Gnostic teachings based on suprasensory cognition. Christian mystical theology accepted much of what was current in Gnosticism, but insisted on its foundation on the faith in Christ as a starting point, its aim being a kind of Christ-experience as the culmination of the mystic path.

The Christian mystic path was one of withdrawal from the world, self-conquest and contemplation as defined by Clement of Alexandria (*c.* A.D. 150–215), the oldest-known writer on mystical theology. The conquest of oneself is a way of negation and abstraction of all that is material and personal and first it leads one into inner darkness—this image is an echo from Philo and it was again used by pseudo-Dionysius and reappeared centuries later in St John of the Cross as the dark night of the soul. The experience of darkness, as Clement explains, is in fact a plunging into the 'vastness of Christ' and through it gaining knowledge of God, not as he is, but as he is not. So God cannot be known, not even in contemplation, during this life, but his image is sealed on the soul by the Son.[29] Despite Neoplatonic language and Gnostic reasoning, faith remained the pivot of Clement's approach. Like other patristic authors, he is not regarded as a mystic, but rather as a writer on mystical theology.[30] Origen (*c.* A.D. 185–254), however, was known to be dedicated to contemplation and ascetisism and seems to speak from experience of rising to 'one mystical and unspeakable vision' and communion with God. He was also credited with spiritual gifts like prophecy and other by-products of mystical practice. The third century then saw a great flowering of contemplative communities in the wake of St Anthony of Egypt, a great ecstatic.

Mention has also to be made of St Augustine (A.D. 354–430) who is often elevated for his strongly personal mystical passages. But strong faith in scriptural revelation coupled with an extreme theological dogmatism which pervades his main works overshadow his mystical experiences and may not have allowed the mystic in him to develop fully. He formulated the lethal dogma 'No salvation outside the Church' and was the father of the predestination doctrine.

The real beginning of the Christian mystical tradition is with pseudo-Dionysius Areopagita (*c.* A.D. 500). He was probably a convert to

Christianity who assumed the name of another famous convert, St Paul's successor as bishop of Athens. His work shows that he had been educated in late Neoplatonic philosophy as presented by Proclus. In his system God is immanent (in all things) as well as transcendent (apart from all things) and is of the nature of Trinity and reveals and manifests himself through the heavenly hierarchy composed of three triads of Great Intelligences. He used biblical names for them which started with Seraphim and ended with angels, thus presenting to Christendom the Neoplatonic spiritual cosmos of Proclus in the new terminology in which it was taken up centuries later by St Thomas of Aquinas in his *Summa Theologiae*.

But higher than this assertive theology is, for Dionysius, the philosophical knowledge of God from the order of the universe and through the process of abstracting the notion of perfection from all the perfections of nature and attributing it to God. Higher still is the philosophical process of analysis by negation whereby God is understood conceptually as beyond concepts: 'He is all in all things and nothing in none; and he is known through all things and through none of them to none' (*De div. nom.* VII, 3) are his almost Zen style statements. But the highest and the only real knowledge of God is through union in mystical vision. One ascends to it on the mystical ladder through a darkness which is brighter than light: 'The super-unknown, the super-luminous and loftiest height, wherein the simple and absolute and unchangeable mysteries are cloaked in super-lucent darkness of hidden mystic silence, which super-shines most super-brightly in the blackest night, and, in the altogether intangible and unseen, super-fills the eyeless understandings with super-beautiful brightness'. (*Myst. Theol.* I.).

The subtle distinction made by Dionysius between the analytical understanding of the mystical goal and its direct experience in mystical vision is the most neglected instance of an early recognition of the difference between mysticism as doctrine (however refined and philosophically analytical) and mysticism as experience (expressible only in approximation by the use of contradictory terms). Many medieval and modern authors have blurred it. Zaehner ignored it, possibly because it was denied by some dogmatic theologians, for whom analytical understanding by negation is directly followed by faith, which is mystical enough in itself, while full knowledge of God, as we saw in Clement, is possible only after death. As to the mystic way, Dionysius gave the following advice which also explains again, in different terms, the highest knowledge: '…in thy intent practice of the mystical contemplations, leave behind both thy senses and thy intellectual operations, and all things known by sense and intellect, and all things which are not and which are, and set thyself, as far as may be, to unite thyself in unknowing with him who is above all being and knowledge, for by being purely free and absolute, out of self and of all things, thou shalt be led up to the ray of the divine darkness, stripped of all and loosed from all'.

Few writers have matched and hardly anybody has surpassed pseudo-Dionysius. His works were translated into Latin in the ninth century by John Scotus Erigena, himself a great mystic, but one of the greatest was Master Eckhart (1260–1327) who described his mystical experiences as transcending any theological ideas of God and Trinity, beyond which is Godhead and higher still one faces nothingness. Summoned by the pope John XXII he died on the way to Avignon. The pope then condemned a number of propositions in his writings as heretical and others as rash and suspect, saying of him that he had wished to know more than he should. The dogmatic theology which had been systematized by St Thomas Aquinas ruled supreme by then and although mystical theology was not suppressed, any deviation in it from the accepted terminology and imagery became dangerous. Great mystics hardly ever abandoned the view that mystical contemplation led to direct knowledge superior to dogmatic theological understanding, but some became more cautious, using carefully chosen Christian imagery and biblical terminology in a figurative sense. A good example is St John of the Cross. Others, like Master Molinos, suffered at the hands of the Inquisition.

This situation created a whole new problem with regard to mystical language. One has now to admit that an author's description of his mystical experience may be free from doctrinal bias even if he uses the terminolgy of dogmatic theology and biblical imagery so that careful interpretation or 'translation' into uncommitted language becomes necessary. On the other hand the author may be a believer in the literal meaning of the Church's teaching in which case his account of mystical experience is not descriptive, but interprets it in the light of the doctrine, perhaps without realizing it, And he may, as a result of his belief in a dogma, stop short of the final mystical realization.

Two examples may illustrate this problem:

The whole mystical tradition points to the final mystical achievement as unification with the goal. The mystical path which was gradually elaborated until it appeared formulated in three stages, starts with *via purgativa* which means purification of the heart, reflected in conduct, and of the mind, which is freed from the shackles of the sensory world, proceeds through *via illuminativa*, an act of inner cognition even though often described as occurring through a 'cloud of unknowing', and culminates in *via unitiva,* the final cognitive-cum-ontic, subjectless and objectless experience of oneness with the ultimate. Eckhart says: 'When I attain this blessedness of union, then all things are in me and in God, and where I am there is God, and where God is, there am I'.[31] St John of the Cross could not use such open language and resorted to erotic biblical imagery from the Song of Songs:

Oh night that was my guide!
Oh darkness dearer than the morning's pride,
Oh night that joined the lover
To the beloved bride
Transfiguring them each into the other.[32]

The inevitable conclusion is that one gets to know God by becoming God or by being directly and intimately united with him.

The other example is from St Gregory the Great (A.D. 540–604):
The soul beholds something beneath His brightness…not that which God is, but that which is under Him…Light cannot be seen as it is. If the mind could not see it at all, it would not even see that it is afar off; and if it perceived it perfectly, it would not see it as though through darkness. Therefore, because it is not altogether seen, nor againaltogether unseen, it is rightly said that it is "seen from afar".' (*Morals on Job* XXXI, 101)[33] The passage seems authentic enough to reveal a mystic, but St Gregory had papal responsibilities for the multitudes of believers in theological dogmas and he already held the dogma which ruled out the possibility of seeing God in this life. The question now is: did the pope interpret the mystic's highest experience in the light of the dogma or did the doctrinal stricture held by the pope impede the mystic's progress to the final stage of *via unitiva*? The quoted passage does look like a description of *via illuminativa*. This raises a further important question for the comparative study of mysticism, namely that of the stages of mystical experience and their identification in different mystical authors within one tradition as well as in different traditions.[34]

The richness of the stream of European mysticism continued for several centuries, also in Protestant Christianity and, of course, from early times it has been abundant in Eastern Christendom. It seems to have subsided in more recent times, but it has by no means dried up. Accounts of mystical experience in our time are being collected and some remarkable reports have also come out of Eastern Europe, particularly from Soviet labour camps.[35] Material for research will probably never be in short supply. But what general conclusions can we draw from this examination?

First, I think, it is clear that there is nothing specifically European and Christian about mysticism as such. Its beginnings in the twilight of Greek history may point to its even older origin in Indo-European antiquity, which would explain the developed Indo-Āryan mysticism in the Vedas and the fact that traces of mysticism can also be detected in other less-documented areas of Indo-Euorpean tradition. But the fact that mystical trends can be found also in different cultures of the Semitic group, to say nothing of the Chinese example, points clearly to the universality of the phenomenon of mysticism. Of the Semitic traditions the Judaic one contributed substantially to the formation of the European form of mysticism, but other traditions had

undoubtedly their say as well. Mutual influence can be clearly observed at different times and can be assumed to have been stronger and more far reaching than the available historical evidence for it suggests, particularly between Hellenistic and Oriental, and here chiefly Indian, traditions. Christian mysticism is therefore a direct outcome of a merger between the Judaic and Hellenistic streams, with a rivulet coming from India, and enlivened by the mystical dimension in Christ's mission and in the early Christian communities. European mysticism only illustrates the universality of mysticism as a human experience.

Second, we can see that despite doctrinal and terminological differences there is common core to mystical experiences, although room is left for a variety of accompanying phenomena, such as concrete visions or unusual powers, hardly touched upon in this paper. The common core appears to be the experience of union or oneness with the ultimate reality which is beyond any conceptual grasp and is therefore called by conceptually vacuous expressions or by the religious expression 'God' which suggests the idea of an infinite person incorporating all perfections. Some doctrinal and terminological differences are also caused by misjudging the stages of attainment and their different demarcation and assessment. In addition there are problems connected with the types of language used and the reasons, conscious or otherwise, for using a particular type of language.

Third, there appears to be a remarkable degree of agreement over the general outlines of the mystic way, while concrete techniques for entering the state of contemplation may be variegated.

If all these factors are taken into account, it seems to me that an identity of purpose and of final realization in the developed mystical traditions of the world can be assumed. One important point still to be considered is that of the ontological contents or otherwise of the ultimate mystical experience. I think that there are two pitfalls here which an historian of religion should avoid. The first is that of creating another mystical doctrine, which nowadays would probably mean adopting and perhaps modifying an existing one. As a good example we can point to the work of W.F. Stace. Using the combined methods of comparative religion and philosophical analysis, he put forth a version of pantheism as the metaphysical doctrine best suited to describe the ontological basis of mystical experience.[36] As such it may have its merits while at the same time being open to various criticisms,[37] but it has no chance of being adopted by a majority let alone all of those concerned with research into mysticism because, as a definite theory, it may limit in certain ways the approach to research.

The second pitfall would consist in accepting a theory from another field of learning, such as science, which would have an even more detrimental effect. (The social sciences have suffered from this mistake.) What I have in mind is scientific positivism, which uses reductionist methods of interpretation. It would make mystical experience into an epiphenomenon

of human emotional life which in turn is derived from the biology of the nervous system and it would be denied any possibility of objective reference or ontological validity. This is Scharfstein's position, referred to earlier. There are rival theories in sciences also, and further reduction brings biological forces down to the level of physical forces to which alone is ascribed true reality. (This picture of a mechanisitic universe frightens even some scientists back into adopting, sometimes only privately, a traditional religious faith. The more thoughtful ones embark on the study of philosophy or Eastern mysticism.)

The room for manoeuvre between these two pitfalls is very small and the task of working out an acceptable position which would be a methodological help is a formidable one. I would like to formulate a few suggestions outlining the general direction in which a solution could be sought:

1. There is an ontological basis to mystical experience which is also, in various symbolical disguises, the object of religious faith as well as of philosophical quest.

2. Mystical experience is a suprasensory and supraintellectual, i.e. intuitive, apprehension of that ontological reality and it proceeds in stages of approximation, culminating in cognitive experience of being ontologically united with it.

3. Conceptual descriptions of the ultimate mystical experience are inadequate and provide only partial impressions of its ontological basis, never a global view. When guided by an analytical approach they are without contents, suggesting voidness or nothingness, while psychologically the experience has fullness of contents describable in terms of being, knowledge or intelligence and bliss.

4. The dimension of the ultimate reality is beyond the world of external objects and its counterpart, man's sensory apparatus with its co-ordinating intellect, and is therefore transcendent, while the experience of union with it is reached through the process of inner cognition which gives it the character of immanence.

5. Metaphysical descriptions of the ultimate reality, when informed by an analytical approach, ascribe to it the character of impersonality; when guided by the psychological contents of the ultimate experience of fullness, they suggest a superstructural unit not dissimilar, though vastly superior, to the human personality; in religious terms it becomes the infinite personality of God. The ultimate ontological dimension may therefore unite dichotomies which on the level of intellectual understanding remain contradictory.[38] (This happens to be a feature not altogether unknown to modern science, particularly to subatomic physics.)

6. Since the practical mystical paths as developed by different traditions show a remarkable structural unity, experimental application of mystical techniques should be possible, especially where a high degree of doctrinal

neutrality has been achieved as in some forms of Indian Yoga. It is therefore desirable to include this approach along with current methods of research into mysticism.

NOTES

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3 ERE, vol. 9, pp. 84–5.
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5 Ibid., p. 168.
6 Ibid., p. 206.
7 Ibid., p. 104.
8 Karel Werner, *Yoga and Indian Philosophy*, Delhi, repr. 1980 (1st ed. 1977), pp. 89–91,
9 Fritz Staal, *Exploring Mysticism*, Harmondsworth 1975, p. 75.
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11 Ibid., p. 26.
12 Ibid., p. 160.
13 Ibid., p. 169.
14 Staal, op. cit., p. 18.
15 Ibid., p. 125.
16 Werner, op. cit., p. 178.
17 Cf. Johannes Leipoldt, *Von den Mysterien zur Kirche*, Leipzig 1961, pp. 5–50. For the nature of the 'mystery plays' cf. K.H.E.de Jong, *Das antike Mysterienwesen*, Leiden 1919 (2nd ed.), and *De Apuleio Isiacorum mysteriorum teste*, Leiden 1901. For the wider context cf. John Pollard, *Seers, Shrines and Sirens*, London 1965.
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19 Hadas and Smith, op. cit., p. 42.
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21 R.S.Brumbaugh, *The Philosophers of Greece*, London 1966, p. 158.
22 Ibid., p. 195.
23 Rufus M.Jones, *Studies in Mystical Religion*, London 1918, p. 68.
24 Ibid.. p. 79.
25 Karl Jaspers, *The Great Philosophers*, London 1966 (German ed. 1957), vol. 2, *The Original Thinkers*, p. 38.
26 Cf. Jaspers, op. cit., chapter on Plotinus.

27 Karel Werner, 'Symbolism in the Vedas and its Conceptualisation', *Numen,* vol. XXIV (1977), fase. 3, pp. 223–40. A revised version is in preparation for the second collection of papers from Symposia on Indian religions which will be concerned with Symbolism.
28 J.Chapman in ERE, vol. 9, p. 90.
29 Ibid., p. 91.
30 R.M.Jones, op. cit., p. 83.
31 Ibid., p. 233.
32 St John of the Cross, *Poems,* with a translation by Roy Campbell, Harmondsworth, repr. 1968, p. 27. The translation is misleading to a degree, because it suggests complete mutual identity of the soul and God on an equal level. The original, however, is rather more cautious:

Oh noche, que juntaste
Amado con amada,
Amada en el Amado transformada!

33 ERE, p. 94.
34 Peter G.Moore, 'Recent Studies of Mysticism', *Religion,* vol. 3 (1973), part 2, pp. 146–56. See pp. 153–4.
35 Mihajlo Mihajlov, 'Mystical Experiences of the Labour Camps', *Kontinent 2, The Alternative Voice of Russia and Eastern Europe,* London 1978, pp. 103–31.
36 W.T.Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy,* London 1961, pp. 240–50.
37 Moore, op. cit., pp. 149–50.
38 Werner, 'Symbolism in the Vedas…', pp. 229–30.

2
MYSTICISM AND INDIAN SPIRITUALITY

Karel Werner

Although the term mysticism is of Western origin, it has been used in the context of Indian spiritual tradition both by European and Indian authors, often without any attempt to define it. This is perhaps because there is, after all, a certain broad consensus about its meaning among most scholars concerned with religious studies despite the ambiguity of the term as it is frequently exhibited in its popular usage and sometimes also in academic works: we have seen on previous pages how broadly the term is employed for example by Scharfstein.

For the purposes of this survey, however, I shall adhere to the understanding of mysticism as it follows from the results of the investigations in my introductory paper. In particular, I shall look at the mystical dimension in Indian spiritual traditions from the angle of the division of its endeavours and results into the previously discussed three categories of doctrine, experience and path.

Furthermore I regard the threefold division of the mystical progress and experience into the three stages as the path of purification of the heart (*via purgativa,*) the path of illumination of the mind (*via illuminativa*) and the path of unification of the mystic with the goal of his efforts (*via unitiva*) as both useful for the purpose of theoretical study and universally valid across the boundaries of cultures and traditions because, on analysis, all the three components can be found in developed mysticism of any religious system.

The usefulness of the threefold division into doctrine, experience and path lies especially in its hermeneutical value: it enables the scholar as someome standing outside a particular mystical tradition or movement to assess its basic nature and find out which of the three elements predominates in it and then formulate his interpretations accordingly.

The universal applicability of this threefold division points to another important conclusion, namely that one can assume that all mystical or deeper spiritual systems possess a certain structural correspondence and most likely also an identity of purpose and final goal.

From the study of various religious systems it further seems to follow that mysticism is the heart of every developed religion lending it the dimension

of depth. It is almost always possible to trace the beginning of a religious tradition to mystical experiences of its founder(s). In the course of the subsequent development of a given religious tradition its mystical dimension may go through times when it is at a low ebb, but if it disappears entirely to become only a vestige of the past, the religious tradition in question is in a crisis and may be in danger of perishing entirely.

India offers us an example of religious development whose phases are marked by the emergence of ever-renewed mystical experiences, ever freshly formulated mystical doctrines and periodically reformulated mystical paths. In that respect the Indian religious history provides us with a very vivid and concrete illustration of the above thesis about the universality of mysticism and its overall structural unity across cultural boundaries.

The earliest highly-developed and well-studied stage of Indian religious development is the Vedic religion and we must, naturally, look for its mystical dimension. The nature of the Vedic mystical dimension has been, however, seriously undervalued. Thus S.N. Dasgupta who produced one of the earliest collections of studies of Hindu mysticism dealt with the Vedic period under the heading 'Sacrificial Mysticism'.[1] To him mysticism in the Vedas is what surrounds their sacrificial rituals which have a mysterious link to cosmic forces and human events. Correctly performed rituals can manipulate those forces 'for the advantage of the individual'.

If we bear in mind the double meaning of the term mysticism as it was explained at the beginning of the previous paper, then we shall see that S.N.Dasgupta uses it here obviously in its wider sense which of course may include the magic of ritual performances. He may have done so more or less unwittingly without being fully aware of the double meaning of the term. But all subsequent instances of Hindu mysticism he deals with in his book, starting with the peak achievements of the Upaniṣads, are examples of mysticism in the narrower or proper sense of the word. And so one would have expected him to search in the Vedas at least for some kind of beginnings of what only a few centuries later surfaced as a highly-developed and truly mystical approach.

But S.N.Dasgupta apparently looked upon the Vedas through the eyes of the early European scholarship which undervalued the depth of the Vedic spirituality and saw the Vedas as merely a compendium of sacrificial lore, regarding their more obviously non-ritual and valuable hymns at best as iyrical nature poetry.[2]

It is, of course, true that many Vedic hymns have ritualistic links with the sacrifice which was a major or even the central concern of the Brahminic religion in the later Vedic period, but the original inspiration behind the hymns of the RV was of a much deeper nature. The bulk of them originated before the era of the elaborate ritual practices anyway and although they were

later used and sometimes further adapted for ritual, their original purpose was spiritual.

In all high religions the ritualistic and ecclesiastical phase of their history followed the original spiritual beginnings of a movement which formed around or in the wake of a teacher who was a prophetic figure or a spiritually enlightened personality, sometimes regarded as an incarnation of God. Sometimes, as in Judaism, the original spiritual message was transmitted in stages by a series of prophets who claimed to have been called to carry out their mission directly by God who revealed his will through them.

There is no reason why the beginnings of the Vedic religion should be looked upon in a different way and regarded as an outcome of poetic inspiration by natural forces with some primitive and sacrificial magic thrown in and nothing else. The later Hindu tradition has always claimed that the Vedas are a product of divine revelation which was transmitted to their ancestors by ancient seers (*ṛṣis*) Certain *ṛṣis* were already in Vedic times legendary ancient figures and were looked upon as ‘path-finders’ (RV 1, 72, 2; 1, 105, 15) who had won immortality and thereby become equal in status and power to gods (RV 10.54, 4).[3] They reached the heights of immortality through the development of a special faculty of a visionary or mystical and meditative character called *dhīti* to whose investigation Gonda dedicated a whole book.[4] This mystical vision enabled the ancient seers to discover and grasp the substance and meaning of the eternal law (*ṛta* cf. RV 4, 23, 8) governing the whole of manifested reality as well as its emergence from the unmanifest.[5]

In the process of transmitting this vision of the eternal law to their less spiritually minded contemporaries, the seers produced their message on more than one level.[6] The transmission of a vision is not the vision itself, it is a projection of the original vision into a specific area of human activity and understanding. Besides the poetical, mythological and legendary projections of this vision there was also the area of religious activity which was very close to the heart of archaic man and was capable of exercising a strong influence on his character and behaviour, much more so than words, images and stories. This was ritual action. In performing a rite modelled on mythical or cosmic events Vedic man was able to take in into himself archetypal patterns of thought and behaviour which reflected the hierarchy of the world order and created in him a sense of belonging and an awareness, however dim, that the cosmic law was also the moral law which told him what was right and wrong and that it further was also the social law which determined his place in the structure of the Āryan society.

It was only later in the course of several centuries that Vedic ritual deteriorated into an over-elaborated system of ceremonial observances of the late Vedic or **Brāhmaṇa** period in which the original mystical vision became buried. We can certainly discern evidence in many Vedic hymns

for genuine mystical experiences of the ancient seers which became the basis and starting point of the Vedic religion. It is also sufficiently obvious that for some generations this tradition of mystical approach and cultivation of mystical experiences was kept alive. What is more difficult is to establish the existence of a mystical doctrine in Vedic times since that would require the existence also of systematic expositions and interpretations of those mystical experiences in the context of a philosophical or theological world picture expressed in conceptually understandable terms.

However, although the language of the Vedas is poetical, symbolical and mythological and the hymns do not aim at systematic instruction of listeners, they nevertheless do convey a certain sufficiently clear world view if not a systematic doctrine. They allow us to glimpse the Vedic man's picture of an ordered universe with a vast spiritual dimension behind it. That is expressed repeatedly by Vedic cosmogonic myths of creation—that of the goddess Aditi, mother of all that is, has been and will be (RV 1, 89, 10), that of the cosmic *puruṣa* or the giant cosmic person (RV 10, 90), of *hīraṇyagarbha* or the cosmic 'golden germ' (RV 10, 121), of *skambha*, the cosmic pillar or *axis mundi* (AV 10, 7) and that of the Indra-Vṛtra combat, symbolizing the victory of cosmic creation over the dark demon of stagnation, which is referred to many times throughout the Vedas. This view of the world and its origins was later also expressed in terms almost devoid of mythological imagery in the so-called hymn of creation (RV 10, 129) whereby began the process of conceptualization of the Vedic vision of reality which then continued in the Upaniṣads and eventually produced fully formulated mystical doctrines and philosophical systems.[7]

The existence of a path to immortality is quite clearly mentioned in connection with the ancient seers who had found it, as quoted above. Once found it must undoubtedly have been handed down and taught in some way by the pathfinder seers to their disciples and this process would certainly have gone on for a number of generations. The actual method can hardly be ascertained from the hymns, but one could say with Aurobindo that it must have been some kind of progressive self-culture and assume with Hauer that it comprised some technique of meditative absorption.[8] A personal discipline and meditational practice have been the pillars of the mystic way in all times and all traditions.

When eventually the elaborate structure of brahminic ritualism which grew around and out of the original mystical vision of the ancient seers very nearly stifled all spirituality there came a new eruption of mystical experience which is documented in the Upaniṣads. The approach to the transcendent through the worship of gods was largely brushed aside and a direct encounter with the ultimate reality was sought. In the final break-through it amounted to an overwhelming and all-embracing experience expressed in bold statements such as 'I am *brahman*' (*aham brahmāsmi*, BU 1, 4, 10). 'you are that, (*tat tvam asi*, CU 6, 15, 3) and 'I am

all this' (= this whole universe: *aham evedam sarvam*, CU 7, 25, 1). This certainly appears to be a genuine expression of an experience of *unio mystica* if ever there was one. It came as a culmination of a search which involved both intellectual questioning and a strong emotional need for security and certainty in face of an uncertain world in which man was the victim of successive deaths. As a result the final experience found a ready expression in what we can classify as the metaphysical gnosticism of the Upaniṣads. The philosophical search progressed far enough by then to be able to supply adequate and appealing metaphysical terms to the mystic to express himself when his experience overwhelmed him and also to the thinker when he later tried to express his mystical experience in a more systematic and intellectually graspable way.

As is well known, this search proceeded first into the cosmic dimension and its inspiration must have been derived from the distant echoes of the Vedic cosmogonical mythology, all pointing in the direction of the original unity as the source of the cosmic diversity. That unity, which was understood to be the source and the directing agency of everything that is, was called by Yājňavalkya, at a certain stage, 'the imperishable' (*akṣara* BU 3, 8, 8–11), but eventually it obtained the name *brahman* which became universally accepted.

When the line of inquiry turned from the cosmic perspective to the inner dimension of man's own personality, *brahman* was found again lurking behind all life functions and mental faculties, behind the mind and behind the heart (BU 4, 2, 1–7). And in the course of further search it was eventually discovered to be men's very essence, his inner self (*ātman*, BU 4, 2, 4,). This was a great discovery which was new to most participants in the dialogues of the older Upaniṣads, but it was readily accepted. The great unborn *ātman,* the inmost self of man, was identical with *brahman,* the source and essence of the whole of universe as well as all beings and things.

One could argue that this identification was first achieved as a result of a philosophical speculative process which was then translated into contemplative mystical experience, or one can take the opposite view and regard the experience of the *unio mystica* as primary and as preceding the conceptual understanding which followed only afterwards and led to the *brahman-ātman* doctrine in its familiar formulation. It is, of course, equally possible that the two went together. My impression is that the experience which prompted the three statements quoted above preceded the conceptual elaboration and understanding of the doctrine of unity. In any event, in the early Upaniṣads we have, for the first time and side by side, both the experience and the doctrine and we have here, also for the first time, a clear formulation of the ontological nature of the final experience of the true knowledge of the ultimate: to know *brahman* is to be *brahman* (MuU 3, 2, 9). True knowledge is here understood as being beyond the

senses and the intellect. It is a non-dual, unmediated process of knowing, without the split between object and subject.

The Upaniṣads are also very keen on transmitting this true and higher knowledge, this non-dual state of being-cum-knowing which is, besides, also the only true bliss (BU 7, 23) and making it available to truth seekers. And so we get in them also the first formulation of a path to realization. It is said, however, that it is a difficult path (KaU 1, 3, 14), because it leads away from the senses and goes inward (KaU 2, 1, 1). As such it is a path of renunciation and Yoga. The word Yoga appears here for the first time in its fully technical meaning, namely as a systematic training, and it already received a more or less clear formulation in some other middle Upaniṣads beside KaU such as Śvetāśvatara and Maitrī. Further process of the systematization of Yoga as a path to the ultimate mystic goal is obvious in subsequent Yoga Upaniṣads and the culmination of this endeavour is represented by Patañjali's codification of this path into a system of the eightfold Yoga. Thus all the three ingredients of mysticism emerged out of the Upaniṣads several centuries earlier than in Europe.

Simultaneously with the development described so far there was another, largely independent, process of search going on outside the well-documented Vedic tradition. Although this independent process has not left behind its own literary sources, there is enough evidence from indirect sources to leave us in little doubt that at the time of the early Upaniṣads and early Buddhism this outsiders' stream of spiritual quest was already very old. This is particularly clear from the Pāli Canon of Buddhism. But how far into the past it reaches cannot be ascertained. It is certainly not possible to speculate about its existence at the time of the ancient seers, the 'path-finders' and originators of the Vedic lore, who were themselves already legendary when the hymns as known to us were actually being composed. However, at the later Vedic time, before the final redaction of the RV, there is good evidence about non-Vedic accomplished sages, conspicuous by their nakedness and long hair, roaming the country and teaching their 'path of the wind'. They were known as *munis* and *keśins* and regarded themselves as immortals who were equally at home in the higher spiritual world and in this world of mortals, celestial beings and sylvan beasts. The next paper is dedicated to the analysis of the hymn of the Long-haired One and his status with respect to mysticism and Yoga.

Besides *keśins* there were other wanderers, some of them of the solitary type, known as *vrâtyas*, regarded by Hauer as the original Yogis (*Uryogins*)[9] The tradition of wandering ascetics, later known as *śramaṇas* outside the Vedic and Brahminic establishment continued for centuries in relative obscurity while ceremonial religion flourished. But it was obviously gradually gaining more recognition and power of attraction for those who became weary of Brahminic sacrificial ritualism and sought some clearer solution of the riddle of existence. As the Vedic tradition preserved the

memory of the accomplished *ṛṣis* of old, so this unorthodox *śramaṇa* movement harboured memories of enlightened *munis* of the past. It was not, of course, a unitary movement. It was rather a broad trend manifesting itself in individual truth-seekers and teachers with groups of followers around some of them. This trend eventually reached its peak in the great achievement of Buddhism and also of Jainism and other minor schools of Yoga, now mostly forgotten. The memory of two of them has been preserved in the Pāli Canon in connection with the Buddha's life story.

Some might object to regarding the Buddhist (and possibly also Jainist) top achievement of *nirvāṇa* as mystical whilst admitting to the mystical character of jhānic states of mind. But this is only a terminological problem. Maybe it is not correct to speak about *unio mystica* when describing the attainment of *nirvāṇa* in early Buddhism since the term originated in the context of theistic theology. But both terms point to the highest achievement of what is seen as the ultimate reality in the two respective systems. In both cases it is also admitted that the designation of the goal—God, *nirvāṇa*—does not really convey the true nature of the ultimate reality which is felt to be beyond description and, as I already tried to explain elsewhere,[10] beyond the conceptual dichotomy of the personal and impersonal.

If we agree that the goal of mysticism is the final and ultimate truth achieved by direct experience, then the *nirvāṇa* of Buddhism falls within that heading. When C.A.Keller tried to define mystical writings he arrived at a criterion for them by saying that they are texts 'which discuss the path towards realisation of the ultimate knowledge which each particular religion has to offer and which contain statements about the nature of such knowledge'.[11] F.J.Streng defined the meaning of mysticism as 'an interior illumination of reality that results in ultimate freedom.'[12] Both these definitions include the Buddhist *nirvāṇa*.

Of the three constituents of mysticism, experience is the one most emphasized and the path the one most elaborated in early Buddhism. The doctrine on the other hand was kept low. The Buddha avoided doctrinal formulations concerning the final reality as much as possible in order to prevent his followers from resting content with minor achievements on the path in which the absence of the final experience could be substituted by conceptual understanding of the doctrine or by religious faith, a situation which sometimes occurs, in both varieties, in the context of the Hindu systems of doctrine. One can, of course, maintain that there is an implicit doctrine contained also in the Buddha's teachings and there has been no shortage of explicit expositions of what their authors have understood to be the actual doctrine of early Buddhism about the ultimate goal of *nirvāṇa*. Such attempts are no doubt perfectly legitimate, because there certainly is a definite world-view contained in the Buddha's teachings, although it is not easy to formulate it in a way which would not immediately invite objections

from one or another quarter of both the scholarly interpreters of Buddhism and its followers.

The peak achievements of the Upaniṣadic and Buddhist mysticism were truly élitist, yet they also had popular appeal even though they were out of reach of most people, because of most people's lack of total practical commitment. But the best minds among the earnest truth-seekers of the time were attracted by them, because they appreciated the promise of a relatively speady realization of the goal. This was made possible by the careful concentration of Buddhism and the various Yoga movements on the elaboration of the path. This feature which is prominent in most schools of Indian mysticism accounts for the unique form of mysticism which only India produced, namely for Yoga. The Buddha's eightfold path and Patañjali's *aṣṭaṅga* yoga are the two most highly systematized techniques of mystical training and this is what characterizes Yoga most. Systematization of techniques and methods is also an important feature of modern scientific procedures and so one can almost say that Yoga, as a methodical device, is mysticism gone scientific.

Patañjali's system is unthinkable without Buddhism. As far as its terminology goes there is much in the *Yoga Sūtras* that reminds us of Buddhist formulations from the Pāli Canon and even more so from the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma and from Sautrāntika. So while containing a complete systematization of Yogic (mystical) experience from initial stages to the highest point of final liberation (*kaivalya,*) the *Yoga Sūtras* are almost as cagey about spelling out a doctrine as early Buddhism. Unlike with Buddhism, however, few attempts have been made to formulate, from within the *Yoga Sūtras*, a specific doctrine which may have been Patañjali's or which may have been held in the various Yoga circles from which he, or the redactors of the *Yoga Sūtras* hiding behind his name, drew their materials. Instead, later commentators like Vyāsa interpreted the doctrine that may be implicit in the *Yoga Sūtras* in terms of Sāṅkhya philosophy. They were followed by many modern interpreters, quite unjustifiably, since classical Sāṅkhya was formulated several centuries after Patañjali so that any analysis of the relation between the Sāṅkhya doctrine and the implicit Patañjali's doctrine would have to be preceded by a reconstruction of the likely state of the Sāṅkhya teachings at a time of the composition of the *Yoga Sūtras*.[13]

Despite the highly élitist character of the goal of Yoga and the exclusivity of its methods, its wide appeal continued. What was attractive to many about it was that it was an individual achievement which did not require the mediation of priests with their endless and expensive ceremonies. It usually necessitated just a special relation to a spiritually advanced teacher. In rare instances one could hope to find an accomplished master as one's guide. Such was the reputation of the Buddha with many followers and also of Jina and some other less-known spiritual teachers.

In this atmosphere it eventually came to a wide popularization of Yoga which inevitably meant a certain modification of its previous methodical and impersonal approach and of its minimal doctrinal involvement. With popular following there arose the need to satisfy the emotional allegiance people normally have to the transcendent, represented as a personal God, in the context of religious observance. This found its natural expression in the theistic type of mysticism which thus opened the gate to some kind of direct experience of the divine for large numbers of people for whom a methodical approach did not mean much and solitary meditation did not appear attractive. Their attitude was one of devotion which could be nourished only on mutuality. And thus appeared on the scene the Bhakti Yoga which found its early popular exposition in the Bhagavad Gītā which, however, popularized to some extent also some of the most technical methods of Yoga, making them accessible to a larger number of people, as well as the doctrines of the Upaniṣads about the unity of the individual and the universal which to the popular mind means man and God.

On the Buddhist side it was the compassion expressed in the Bodhisattva approach which gave the opportunity to masses of followers, previously left out of the immediate liberation scheme of the strict eightfold path, to have an outlet for their emotional need for an all-embracing and assisted path.

All this meant that mystical experience, at least in its elementary forms, became almost universally available. Obviously, this does not represent a peak in the development of Indian approaches to spirituality, but it did give both Hinduism and Buddhism as religions a certain awareness of the mystical dimension on all levels of worship which is still alive in them to a large degree and which is not easily found in other religions.

However, there is no escaping the fact that the way of the mystic is an exclusive way. Its true aim is the realization of the ultimate reality which requires detachment from the immediate relative reality and this can never become the prevailing concern of multitudes. Consequently the élitist character of mysticism made itself felt again very quickly. A Bodhisattva may have compassion for all creatures and sacrifice his final liberation for the sake of helping them, but he nevertheless aims at complete enlightenment which includes the perfect skill of an accomplished teacher and spiritual powers which will enable him to pursue his mission. All this points to a mystical experience of the highest order arrived at on an arduous path through several stages (*bhūmis*,) involving the development of superhuman perfections (*pāramitās*) which is a very individualistic and élitist achievement.

Thus the eightfold path of a follower of the Buddha was replaced by the Bodhisattva path and the description of the goal was also reformulated. At the same time the doctrinal component of Buddhism grew in the context of Mahāyāna mysticism more and more until it developed into new and lofty metaphysical systems in which both the impersonal and personalized

approaches found full and elaborate expression. On the one hand we have the *tri kāya* doctrine of layers of reality converging in the *dharmakāya* and on the other we are faced with the overwhelming hierarchy of cosmic *buddhas* and *bodhisattvas* presided over by Ādi Buddha. The dichotomy and the inevitable coexistence of the personal and the impersonal in the attempted conceptual and symbolical descriptions of the experience of the ultimate reality again make their unavoidable appearance.

The mystical doctrines of the Mahāyāna have quite a number of features which were developed in a somewhat similar way and almost simultaneously by European mystical theology based as it was on the Neoplatonic philosophy as transmitted by pseudo-Dionysios Areopagita. It is hardly possible to imagine a better example of corresponding development in two mystical traditions, although there is some possibility of earlier Indian influence on the formation of the doctrines of Neoplatonism as was hinted at in the previous paper.

Within the Hindu tradition mysticism as doctrine and experience as well as path reached its new peak in Śankara's system of Advaita Vedānta. The experience of oneness dominated Śankara's thinking and his understanding of older sources, particularly the Upaniṣads, and it completely determined his doctrinal formulations which largely overshadowed Śankara as practical mystic and teacher of a Yoga path. In his commitment to a specific doctrinal formulation Śankara was dependent on Gaudapāda, his teacher's teacher, on Bādārāyana, the founder of Vedantism, and possibly on an older tradition of *Varaha sahodara* vṛtti.[14] It would therefore be difficult to decide whether Śankara's uncompromising monism was an outcome of his experience for which he found confirmation in his predecessors' interpretations of the Upaniṣads or whether his previous acceptance of monism on philosophical grounds found subsequent support in the overwhelming experience of oneness in *samādhi*. The Upaniṣads, of course, contain materials which enabled other schools also to claim their support for their own different interpretations. It has, however, been an undisputed tenet within Śankara's school for centuries that 'this world of diversity is false; reality, myself included, is non-dual *brahman ;* the evidence of it is *vedānta*[=Upaniṣads], gurus as well as direct experience'.[15]

I think that we have here an almost inextricable symbiosis of doctrine and experience, but what is important is that Śankara most emphatically insisted on the actual realization of personal experience without which the doctrine means nothing. One has to know the truth directly; all else, including verbal knowledge of the doctrine, is still within the sphere of ignorance. Again: to know *brahman* is to be *brahman*. The practical way to this realization is the way of knowledge which became known as Jňāna Yoga. Śankara's Yoga path follows in many details the older schemes of Yoga training as known particularly from Pataňjali's account, but it also has its own specific techniques of developing the discriminatory faculty of the mind whereby it

could sift through its experiences and eliminate from them those which are concerned with transitory, unreal features as compared with those which point to the eternal and real.

The inevitable differences in descriptions of the ultimate and its real nature, well known already from the Upaniṣads themselves, led quite naturally to the establishment of different schools of Vedāntism of which there are at least five. The most important one after Śankara's is Viśiṣṭa Advaita of Rāmaṇuja . In it the previously mentioned popular path of Bhakti received an elaborate doctrinal backing in which a certain relative or qualified status is allowed for individual beings also in the context of ultimate reality which is conceived in personalized terms. Thus Vedāntism, like Buddhism, reflects the ineffability of the ultimate experience which does not lend itself to simple descriptions.

That does not mean that clear-cut descriptions are necessarily entirely wrong as opponents in the polemics of rival schools would have us believe; rather it indicates the simpler fact that the ultimate truth is bigger than words and that therefore every logically straightforward and consistent description of its experience must appear to be a simplification. This, in turn, does not mean that such a description is entirely useless, since it does convey a certain idea about the ultimate to the totally inexperienced and may act as an encouragement and motivation for entering the mystic path. A variety of descriptions addresses a variety of minds according to their dispositions.

There have been objections to this kind of interpretation of differing mystical doctrines and the consequent claim of a common core in all mystical traditions. S.T.Katz expressed it bluntly saying that mysticism promises 'something for everybody if not everything to everybody'.[16] But that is an ill-founded criticism. The differing interpretations merely express the infinite richness of the ultimate which must be bigger than individual minds which can therefore approach it from a large variety of starting points. Various simplified descriptions of the ultimate goal become wrong only if taken literally and if they are individually believed in to the exclusion of other descriptions. That can happen only when the doctrine, accepted on authority, becomes more important than the experience, which means that the mystic path is not really being followed. Then we are in the province of theological or philosophical polemics. These do occur also, of course, among historians of religions if they bring into their inquiry personal preferences or beliefs.

With Mahāyāna Buddhism and Vedāntism Indian spirituality reached its peak, particularly in the elaboration of mystical doctrines. But the whole process of mystical endeavours did not stop there. Although Buddhism eventually disappeared from the Indian scene to flourish elsewhere, Yoga and broader mystical movements as well as doctrinal creativity have continued to live in India till modern times as shown by the lives and work

of such personalities as Ramakrishna, Ramana, Aurobindo, Ananda Mayi Ma and others.

NOTES

1 S.N.Dasgupta, *Hindu Mysticism,* New York 1927 (repr. 1959), pp. 3–30.

2 He expressed this view previously already in his multi-volume work *A History of Indian Philosophy I,* Cambridge 1951 (1st ed. 1922). p. 17. I have discussed the early views of scholars on the Vedic religion in my article 'On Interpreting the Vedas', *Religion,* vol. 7 (1977). pp. 189–200.

3 I have dealt with the question of immortality in the Vedas as a special achievement of ancient *ṛṣis* as distinct from the limited reward of the ordinary worshipper in my article 'The Vedic Concept of Human Personality and its Destiny', *Journal of Indian Philosophy,* vol. 5 (1978), pp. 275–89.

4 Jan Gonda, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets,* The Hague 1963.

5 A comprehensive study of *ṛta* has been written by Jeanine Miller. *The Vision of Cosmic Order in the Vedas,* London 1985.

6 I have touched upon the question of understanding the Vedas on more than one level in the article 'On interpreting the Vedas', see above, note 2, and dealt with it more fully in my paper 'The Teachings of the Veda and the *ādhyātmika* Method of Interpretation', *Golden Jubilee Volume, Vaidika Samsodhana Mandala,* Poona 1981, pp. 288–95.

7 I have analysed the myth of Aditi in relation to the creation hymn RV 10, 129 in an earlier paper 'Symbolism in the Vedas and its Conceptualisation', *Numen* XXIV (1977), pp. 223–40, to appear in a revised form in the second volume of collected papers from the Symposia on Indian religions. For the Indra-Vṛtra myth and other Vedic cosmogonies see Norman W.Brown, 'The Creation Myth of the Rig Veda', *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* vol. 62 (1942), pp. 85–98. Also: Mircea Elliade, *Cosmos and History,* New York 1959, p. 19ff and later again in *A History of Religious Ideas,* vol. I, London 1979 (French ed. 1976), pp. 205–8. Cf. also F.B.J.Kuiper, 'Cosmogony and Conception: A Query', *History of Religions,* vol. 10 (1970), pp. 91–138; reprinted in *Ancient Indian Cosmogony,* essays selected and introduced by John Irwin, Delhi 1983, pp. 90–137, where other essays are also relevant to our theme.

8 See Aurobindo Ghosh, *The Secret of the Veda,* Birth Centenary Library, vol. 10, Pondicherry 1971, p. 8, and J.W.Hauer, *Der Yoga. Ein indischer Weg zum Selbst,* Stuttgart 1958, p. 19, respectively.

9 J.W.Hauer, *Das Vrātya. Untersuchungen über die nicht-brahmanische Religion Alt-Indiens,* Stuttgart 1928. Also: R.Choudhari, *Vrātyas in Ancient India,* Varanasi 1964. I have dealt initially with this problem in my article 'Religious Practice and Yoga in the Time of the Vedas, Upaniṣads and Early Buddhism', *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute,* vol. LVI (1975), pp. 179–94.
10 'Symbolism in the Vedas…', pp. 229–30.
11 'Mystical Literature', p. 77, in S.T.Katz (ed.), *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis,* London 1978, pp. 75–100.
12 'Language and Mystical Awareness', p. 142, ibid. pp. 141–60.
13 The closeness of Buddhist and Patañjali's terminology was recognized already by L.de la Vallee Poussin, 'Le Bouddhisme et le Yoga de Patanjali', *Melanges chinois et bouddhique,* vol. 5 (1936/37), pp. 223–42. The problem has been again elucidated by G.J.Larson in his paper 'An Old Problem Revisited: the Relation between Sāṅkhya, Yoga and Buddhism' delivered at the XXXII ICANAS (Hamburg 1986). He draws attention to the fact that Vyāsa 'sāṅkhyacized' Yoga Sūtras more than their text warrants.
14 Cf. S.Radhakrishnan, *The Brahma Sūtra,* London 1960, p. 26.
15 *Ayam prapañco mithyaiva satyam brahmāham advayam/atra pramāṇam vedānta guravo 'nubhavas tathā.* Cf. A.J.Alston, *Śaṅkara* on the *Absolute,* London 1980, p. 62 and 112.
16 See the editor's introduction to *Mysticism and Phil. Analysis,* p. 1.

3
THE LONGHAIRED SAGE OF RV 10, 136: A SHAMAN, A MYSTIC OR A YOGI?

Karel Werner

In the previous paper I referred to the ancient seers (*ṛṣis*) as the pathfinders who were reputed to have won immortality and were thus equal to gods. These spiritual giants with profound mystical insights became the founders of Indian spiritual tradition as the originators of the oldest Vedic hymns and were probably also responsible for shaping the moral awareness of the Vedic Āryans and also much of their religious, cultural and social institutions. They were ancient and legendary figures already to the minds of the redactors of the Vedic collections and we cannot say if any hymns can be ascribed directly to their authorship in the form in which they have been preserved in the RV. But much of the contents of the Vedic hymns does go back to very early times even if many or most of them were given their final form by lesser seers of the younger Vedic period.

The tendency to keep the tradition of seerhood alive was very strong, and active composition of hymns continued for many generations over several centuries. In the process of this poetic creativity old insights and ideas were often incorporated into new hymns while some older hymns were undergoing modifications. Some new hymns did not always find general approval and so the process of adding new poems to the ancient heritage was eventually stopped by the codification of the RV around 1000 B.C.[1] (It can be assumed, however, that the production of religious poetry went on even afterwards in 'unofficial circles' throughout subsequent centuries, gradually changing its character in the process, and that its last descendants in our time are the melodious devotional songs.) Some hymns of the RV were used in a shortened form in liturgy and these were then codified as Sāma Veda. Yajur Veda is a collection of ritual texts closely connected with the sacrificial cult. The three Vedas were the basis on which the priesthood gradually erected the elaborate structure of the Vedic religion whose overwhelming ritualism virtually obscured the spiritual tradition of seerhood for several centuries until the time of the Upaniṣadic revival.

But there were also other individuals inclined to pursue mystical experiences without themselves engaging, like the ancient *ṛṣis*, in attempts to transmit their experiences through mythological poetry and religious

leadership. They adopted mystical pursuits as their way of life. Mysticism as a consciously cultivated way of life is known in India as Yoga. It is the purpose of this paper to establish the actual character of these individuals who were active outside the trend of Vedic mythological creativity and the Brahminic religious orthodoxy and therefore little evidence of their existence, practices and achievements has survived. And such evidence as is available in the Vedas themselves is scanty and indirect.

Nevertheless the indirect evidence is strong enough not to allow any doubt about the existence of spiritually highly advanced wanderers: besides several allusions to them in various hymns of the RV we have the hymn of 'the longhaired one' (*keśin*, RV 10, 136) which is the only hymn in the whole of the Vedas which is fully dedicated to the description of an outsider who does not belong to the brahminic establishment and yet is given a rather sympathetic treatment. He is presented as a longhaired wandering renunciate called *muni*, as distinct from *ṛṣis*, who possesses extraordinary powers and deep spiritual experiences. The word *muni* is derived from the root *man* which means 'to think, to muse, to contemplate, to meditate' all of which is normally done in silence and so the general meaning which the word eventually acquired appears to be 'a silent sage'. The derivative noun *mauneya* later obtained the meaning 'the vow of silence'. This need not be taken in the full sense of the word, and certainly not in early times, but in the general sense: these sages were silent about the nature of their wisdom, they did not preach it to others and did not use it to influence others in the context of communal life as did *ṛṣis*.

The existence of two different types of religious personages in ancient India has been pointed out before. Rahurkar speaks of them as belonging to two distinct 'cultural strands' and refers to them as *ṛṣi*-culture and muni-culture. The *ṛṣis*, according to him, maintained the tradition of prayers and worship while living within the community and 'generally manifested a kind of hieratic attitude'. The *munis* 'practised yoga, austerities and orgiastic rites…glorified life of renunciation, isolation and wandering mendicancy'.[2] Wayman also found evidence for two distinct approaches to the spiritual dimension in ancient India and calls them the traditions of 'truth and silence'. He traces them particularly in the older Upaniṣads, in early Buddhism and in some later literature. The *muni* of our hymn represents to him the silence tradition as does the 'great *muni*', the Buddha. That Buddhism belonged originally to the silence tradition can be seen in its notion of *pratyekabuddhas* (silent *buddhas*), The Buddha himself, however, 'moved to the other side', the tradition of truth (*satya*,) when he decided to teach. Wayman does not refer to the *ṛṣis* of the Vedas as representing the truth tradition, but if he had examined the matter he would have found that they fit well into it as those who had seen the truth and expressed it then to others through their hymns and other activities.[3]

The *keśin* hymn has not been really understood by commentators of brahminic tradition and it has been generally underrated and even greatly misinterpreted over the decades by modern interpreters down to the present day. The only author who, as far as I know, has attempted to bring out the spiritual significance of this hymn in recent times is J.Miller, but even she did not do full justice to it. Yet the strength of experience that seems to lie behind it is such that even in the inadequate interpretations of scholars with entirely different backgrounds there is almost always at least one piece of information, a statement or a conclusion that points to a far deeper meaning of the hymn than the interpreters are willing to admit. Also, if one pieces together their positive or appreciative statements about the hymn, as I shall do later on, one arrives at a highly intriguing picture of a spiritual personage of a very high stature.

When thus preoccupied with the analysis of the hymn and its previous translations and interpretations and then engaged in the attempt to translate it adequately I came to the conclusion that it contained the highest ideas, aspirations and expressions of mystical experience such as one can find in any subsequent Hindu or Buddhist system of spiritual endeavour. But let us first acquaint ourselves with perhaps the latest conventional translation of it from an anthology of Vedic hymns offered to general public and to students of Sanskrit 'who had not had the time to enter upon a study of the Veda'.[4] Its author, W.H.Maurer, seems to be entirely innocent of or ignores a great deal of published research into the hymn and its problems done by those who gave it serious thought and effort:

X.136
THE ASCETIC

1. The longhaired ascetic bears the fire; the longhaired ascetic bears the toxic drink; the longhaired ascetic bears the two worlds; the longhaired ascetic is everything; the heavenly light to behold! The longhaired ascetic is called this light.
2. The hermits have the wind as their girdle. They wear soiled brown garments. They go along the path of the wind, when the gods have entered them.
3. 'Made ecstatic due to our hermit-state, we have mounted upon the winds. Only our bodies do you mortals perceive!'
4. Through the air he flies, looking down upon all forms. The hermit for every god's benefaction is established as a friend.
5. The wind's horse, Vāyu's friend and also one who is impelled by the gods is the hermit. Both oceans he inhabits: the one that is eastern and the western.
6. Going in the path of Apsarases, Gandharvas, beasts, the longhaired ascetic is aware of their intent, a friend most sweet, most exhilarating.

7. Vāyu stirred the draught for him, Kunannamā ground it, when the longhaired ascetic along with Rudra drank the poison from the goblet.

The history of misinterpretation or superficial translation of this hymn is a long one. Perhaps the first misleading interpretation is that of Yāska (*c.* 500 B.C.) in his *Nirukta* (12, 26): '*Keśin* bears fire, *keśin* bears water, keśin bears heaven and earth. The word ***viṣam*** is a synonym of water from the verb ***viṣ-ma*** =to purify…*Keśin* is called this sun. With these words the seer describes the sun.'[5]

Belonging to the official or orthodox trend of the brahminic tradition, Yāska was not sensitive to the underlying spiritual meaning of the Vedic hymns, just as many European Sanskritic philologists in the last century and some of this century, and depended on a rather 'scholastic' understanding of the Vedic mythology and imagery which is often reflected in his etymologies. With him, as far as I could find out, originated the most unlikely interpretation of the *keśin* as the sun or the Sun god (Sūrya), his long hair symbolizing the sun's rays. He was followed by the medieval commentator Sāyana who lived in the southern kingdom of Vijayanagara in the fourteenth century A.D. This interpretation was accepted even by some European scholars of the last century who thought that Indian commentators were naturally the best interpreters of their own native tradition. Thus H.H.Wilson translated the whole RV faithfully following Sāyana[6] and even M.Bloomfield went along with the interpretation of the *keśin* as sun and developed ingenious arguments to support it at a time when scholars like Ludwig, Grassmann and Griffith had rejected it.[7]

Griffith did not elaborate on his translation of the hymn, but he added Roth's summary of it in a footnote: 'The hymn shows the conception that by a life of sanctity the Muni can attain to the fellowship of the deities of the air, the Vāyu, the Rudras, the Asparases, and the Gandharvas; and, furnished like them with wonderful powers, can travel along with them on their course…The beautiful haired, the longhaired, that is to say, the Muni, who during the time of his austerities does not shave his hair, upholds fire, moisture, heaven, and earth, and resembles the world of light, ideas which the later literature so largely contains.'[8]

This is quite a fair summary, without serious misinterpretations, although a bit superficial and lacking in analysis. What is worth noting, however, is that neither Roth nor Griffith suspected our *muni* of drug-taking on account of his drinking poison with Rudra and they both accepted that his was a life of sanctity.

The first European interpretation, which has to be carefully considered because it has been very influential, is that of Oldenberg. Although he dedicated to it hardly half a page in his work on the religion of the Vedas, the echo of his views and conjectures resounded through a large number of subsequent interpretations to the present day, often without due

acknowledgement and always without any backing by research. This is certainly quite remarkable, because Oldenberg dealt with the hymn almost casually while discussing *dikṣā*, a ritual initiation before the sacrificial ceremony, and *tapas*, the ascetic practice required also during the initiation rites. It is worthwhile to translate here his whole account of the hymn:

The hymn vividly describes the orgiastic practices of the old Vedic times, still un-ennobled by the thirst for liberation which moved the ascetics of the Buddhist time, still banished into rude forms of medicinemanship (*Medizinmän-nertum*). The hymn speaks of 'longhaired ecstatics' (*keśin, muni,*) clad in brown dirt, who enter the wind's course, when the gods enter them, who drink, poison (ecstacy-producing medicaments?) with Rudra from a cup. 'In drunken rapture we have ascended the carriage of the wind. You mortals can see only our bodies.'…The wind's steed, the Storm god's friend, the ecstatic is god-driven. He inhabits both seas, that in the east and the western one. He wanders on the path of the Apsarases, Gandharvas, wild animals.[9]

Although—as is obvious—Oldenberg valued little the phenomenon represented by the *keśin,* which he even equated with the 'lowest forms of religious life' and called the 'cultivation of ecstatic association with ghosts', he nevertheless recognized the great antiquity of the ecstatic practices in India which, according to him, were not late innovations, but 'must have played a more significant role in the oldest Vedic times than the limited range of hymnic poetry could reveal'.[10]

Oldenberg made no real attempt to analyse the hymn carefully and gain a proper understanding of it. In what can only be classified as a superficial equation he put the ecstatic practices of the medicine-men of primitive tribal societies, known in the nineteenth century from reports of travellers and observations of ethnologists, on the same level as the spiritual practices referred to in the RV which is a sophisticated religious and literary creation of a developed ancient civilization. His failure to see the full significance of the hymn stemmed most likely from the then prevailing (and in some quarters even now surviving) positivistic and evolutionary thinking applied to the study of the history of religion. When looking at the early Indian religiosity from this vantage point he could not but see the clearly expressed Buddhist goal of liberation as the advanced and ennobled stage of religious quest preceded by lower religious forms such as ritual worship and cult which in turn had been preceded by a wild, primitive and orgiastic stage. He could not see that the frequently expressed longing of the Vedic worshipper for immortality was a manifestation of a similar spiritual quest—expressed, of course, in a different idiom from that in the much later Buddhist texts—which, far from being pursued only by ritual means, was the objective of those who were steeped in the *ṛṣi*-tradition already in very ancient times and

also of the movement of the longhaired *munis*, living lives of renunciation outside the *ṛṣi*-tradition.[11]

The point to mention in favour of Oldenberg's attitude to the hymn is that he did not regard it as a nature myth, but as an account of an existing phenomenon of some antiquity and importance which the official Brahminic establishment, oriented as it was towards the sacrificial cult approach, kept outside its domain, although it was unable to escape its influence entirely.[12]

Oldenberg's reputation was high and indologists of the next generations accepted many of his views, particularly in areas in which they did not do special research themselves. Thus Hillebrandt, in some respects Oldenberg's opponent, and Arbmann, who produced some original research results in Vedic studies, both depended on Oldenberg's views in their evaluation of our hymn. The same is probably true of Griswold who may have been the first to introduce the drug theory, so casually suggested by Oldenberg, into this country when he referred in connection with the hymn to 'poison-liquids that produce ecstasy'.[13]

Of recent German indologists, J.W.Hauer did more than anyone else to gain general recognition for Yoga as a subject to be taken seriously on the academic level. But his attempt to deduce the origin of Yoga practices from the Vedic cult was misguided and earned him the following remark from the pen of Keith: 'J.W.Hauer (Die Anf. d. Yogapr. in Alt. Ind., pp. 9–65) adduces all available evidence but most of it is obviously without value.'[14] Hauer did not recognize the true nature of the *keśin* hymn, because his attitude to it was basically the same as Oldenberg's before him. He, too, believed in upward evolution of Indian religiosity and Yoga was to him a product of this evolution. So he regarded the *muni* as a mere primitive shaman and in his later book went out of his way in order to find traces of developing Yoga procedures in the Vedic ritual observances. Although his observations concerning Vrātyas as forerunners of the *saṅnyāsi* tradition and of Buddhism are probably very near the mark, he did not manage to find the probable link between the *ekavrātya* phenomenon and the wanderer of our hymn and to dissociate him from Oldenberg's casual remarks. Instead, he virtually echoed him without expressing in any way Oldenberg's uncertainty indicated by the question mark. He wrote: 'The *keśin* reached ecstacy because he drank *viṣam* from a cup with Rudra.' And he believed that *viṣam* was some kind of intoxicating drink. He even went further than Oldenberg in calling the *keśin* a '*Wildekstatiker',* but on the other hand he did admit that the *keśin* had also 'great spiritual intuitions'. Finally he gave the following ambiguous summary of the hymn: 'The hymn vividly describes the experiences of those primitive ecstatics who, elevated above all terrestrial heaviness, arrive at cosmic expanse.'[15]

Keith, having so severely criticized Hauer, found the description of the *muni* in our hymn striking. He recognized that the longhaired wanderer

differed entirely from the Brahminic student, because his experiences were not connected either with the sacrifice or with any of the rites ancillary to it or to other ritual procedures. But he quite obviously succumbed to the Oldenberg's tentative suggestion (which he did not care to quote or refer to) when he wrote: '…his ecstasy, it seems, is due to a potent draught which, with Rudra, he drinks from a goblet, perhaps a reference to the use of some poison to produce exhilaration or hypnosis.'[16]

Eliade, as an historian of religion and explorer of the dimension of the 'sacred', was much more open to Yoga and the spiritual values of Indian culture in general and fought consistently against the image which the nineteenth century created of so-called 'inferior societies' in particular.[17] Yet even he looked at Indian spiritual experience from an evolutionistic standpoint. He started his book with an exposition of Pataňjali's Yoga and when he came to consider its prehistory, he was looking for the evidence of elements he knew from the later 'classic' Yoga of Pataňjali. He thought that he had found rudiments of it in the Vedas.

In his investigations Eliade made the mistake of not taking into account the different nature of his two sources separated by more than a thousand years of linguistic development. When tackling our hymn he apparently approached it with preconceived ideas, some of them stemming from his earlier preoccupation with Siberian shamanism. The *keśin* is to him only an ecstatic who but vaguely resembles the Yogi. 'the chief similarity being his ability to fly through the air—but this *siddhi* is a magical power that is found everywhere'. The hymn's references to 'the horse of the wind', the poison drunk with Rudra and to 'the gods whom he incarnates' [*sic!*] point for him 'rather to a shamanizing technique'. He did not analyse the hymn carefully and produced only a hasty, inaccurate and misleading paraphrase of it. Yet he was also struck by it and found the description of the *keśin's* ecstasy significant. He expressed his appreciative impressions as follows: 'The *muni* "disappears in spirit"; abandoning his body, he divines the thoughts of others; he inhabits the "two seas". All of these are experiences transcending the sphere of the profane, are states of consciousness cosmic in structure, though they can be realized through other means than ecstasy.'[18] Those other means he referred to are the three last stages of Pataňjali's Yoga, namely concentration (*dhāraṇā*), meditation (*dhyāna*) and 'enstasis' (*samādhi*) which can be deliberately used for acquiring *siddhis* or 'miraculous powers'.[19] 'Enstasis' is an expression coined by Eliade which he used to distinguish *samādhi* from the 'lower' technique of ecstasy.

Eliade's arbitrary distinction between the achievement of a Yogi of Pataňjali's school of classical Yoga and of a *muni* of Vedic times is based on his understanding of *mauneya* (verse 3), i.e. the sage's state of mind or achievement (which Maurer translates clumsily 'hermit-state'), as being a shamanistic ecstasy, and possibly drug-induced at that. It is highly unlikely that Eliade ever saw or tried to read the original of the hymn. All he wrote

about it and the inaccurate paraphrase of it point to the use of a translation. He also heavily depended on Hauer who in turn followed the unfounded casual remarks of Oldenberg who had rendered *mauneya* as 'drunken rapture' (*trunkene Verzückung*). I have already pointed out above the basic meaning of that expression as associated with contemplation and silent meditation and so the *keśin's* achievement cannot, with justification, be regarded as different in essence from that of a Yogi of classical times who is steeped in his *samādhi*. The difference is clearly only terminological as is understandable with the two texts separated by such a long period of time.

It is a matter for regret that not even Gonda, the most prolific Vedic researcher of this century, has done anything to clarify our picture of the *keśin*. He merely repeated the view about 'ecstatic practices' and referred to Oldenberg, Hauer and Eliade.[20] But he did make one significant contribution to the discussion of the phenomenon of *keśin* when he offered some general comments on the 'world of ecstatic experience'. He confirmed that such figures as represented by the *muni* of our hymn lived predominantly outside the Brahminic culture.[21]

The resounding echo of Oldenberg's remark alluding to the possibility of drug-induced ecstasy (after which, we have to point out again, he put a question mark!) bounced back, after more than half a century, from as far as India, the homeland of our longhaired sage, with the question mark removed. R.N.Dandekar, now retired from the chair of Sanskrit in the University of Poona, a distinguished scholar with a high international reputation (who had, in his young days, studied in Germany) wrote words which read more or less like a direct translation from Oldenberg. He said that our hymn 'clearly relates to the specific orgiastic cult of the *munis*' who seemed to him to have 'indulged in a sort of ecstasy-producing medicament'. And he added a conjecture of his own that 'Rudra is represented in this *munisūkta* almost as the leader of that cult'.[22]

It is perhaps not surprising if this interpretation, although based originally only on a casual remark of Oldenberg which was never given substance in a serious inquiry by him or anyone else, has found ready acceptance in our time when it was influenced by the hippy subculture often acclaiming superficial mysticism à la Aldous Huxley with LSD connections (which, sadly, has now taken an even worse turn, namely to naked hard-drug abuse, quite free from any mystical pretences). In his, in some respects quite thought-provoking book, Staal, in full dependence on Dandekar (and thereby on Oldenberg's question-marked suggestion), unhesitatingly explained our hymn as 'not only the oldest, but one of the most impressive poetic descriptions of mystical experience connected with the effects of a drug'. He gave a very inaccurate translation of the hymn and described it, without having any backing for it in his own or others' serious research, as an indication of the use of various hallucinogens in Vedic times of which *soma*, as explained by the now generally rejected Wasson's mushroom

theory, was one: That *soma* is not the only hallucinogen referred to in the Ṛgveda is clear from the long-hair hymn.'[23] It is a sad reflection on the level of critical re-examination, or the lack of it, of old clichés, which the remark of Oldenberg's has become, that the drug theory has found common acceptance among teachers of Sanskrit like Maurer. In his comment to verse 2 of his translation, given above, he says: '…"toxic drink" refers to some sort of narcotic substance used by the ascetics to induce a trance-like, ecstatic state.' And his observation to verse 7 elaborates: 'This passage…is the oldest reference to the Rudra-Śiva cult of traditional Indian civilisation, which has always been characterised by wild, frenzied rites and revelry involving the consumption of intoxicating beverages and hallucinatory drugs.' (Cf. my note 4.) Such sweeping assertions, which lack substantiation and are not backed by references to any research work, are unworthy of an academic.

The common fallacy of all such interpretations of the Ṛgvedic material is their disregard for the highly symbolical character of the Vedic texts and thereby for the deeper meaning of their mythological background. Their protagonists appear to have always sought only the most obvious and virtually literal explanation which one could be forgiven for calling a kind of (academic) fundamentalism.

A more cautious and less extreme view of our hymn was expressed by Geldner: The song describes the trance-state of an ascetic ecstatic… Oldenberg (*Religion* 404) goes too far in stressing the rough features of a wild medicine-man. The *muni* possesses fully the external signs of the later Yogi and of the god Śiva.'[24] In this statement he was long before preceded by Ludwig, although he did not quote him. Ludwig, moreover, recognized in the image of Rudra drinking the poison a reference to the myth about the churning of the cosmic ocean and to Śiva drinking the poison *halāhala* which has been separated from the ocean first, to be followed later by the drink of immortality. That is why he suggested that one should see in Rudra a Yogi.[25]

There are other, perhaps less important, interpretations of our hymn like that of Sharma who regards the *keśins* as the forerunners of the *śramaṇas* and as such 'the earliest dissenters from the orthodox religion'[26], a view which cannot be upheld and for which there is no evidence. Neither *keśins* nor *śramaṇas* can be held for dissenters from the orthodox religion, because they represented quite a different tradition outside orthodoxy or outside Brahminic culture, as Gonda put it. Turning now to the first comprehensive and serious attempt at a deeper understanding of this remarkable hymn by Miller, I have to say again that bold and imaginative as it is, her interpretation which came quite near to unveiling the true character of the longhaired sage, still failed to do full justice to him, for two reasons.

Firstly, she was too much influenced by Eliade's views and secondly she, too, looked at the hymn with a certain evolutionistic bias—as already the

title of her paper, 'Forerunners of Yoga', indicates. Like others before her she spoke about the 'ecstatic' state of the *munis* and although she admitted that it 'contains an element of luminosity characteristic of the later Yogi experiences' she found, clearly under the influence of Eliade, also 'some marked similarities between *shamanism* and the *munis'* experiences'. She judged them apparently by her understanding of the Pataňjali's elaborate scheme of the stages of *samādhi* when she further wrote: 'The *munis*' experiences cannot even be regarded as simple states of *samādhi*…they still belong to the lowest part of the created cosmos'. She evidently believed that further evolution was necessary to bring our wandering sage of Vedic time from his supposedly primitive mentality to the advanced spirituality of Pataňjali's time.

But as in almost everybody else's case, the underlying strength of the hymn's evidence influenced even her to the point where she appears to have become inconsistent with her own statements. She very nearly ascribed to the sage the highest possible development of man's spirituality when she recognized that he possessed 'detachment from life leading to its mastery' and even admitted that he 'is not merely master of the two worlds, mind and matter, but he has penetrated into *svar*, the spiritual world or level of cognition'.[27] She was further tempted by the view of Bose who interpreted the drinking of poison by the sage in Rudra's company as a symbol of taking, on himself, the world's suffering. This is a suggestion which is not unsound, because in the myth about the churning of the cosmic ocean Śiva drinks the poison in order to save other gods and the whole world from destruction. Yet Miller shrinks back from the temptation of what would appear to be spurious reasons. She must have known about the awareness in the Vedas of the meaning of sacrifice and self-sacrifice for the benefit of the world which is expressed mythologically by the original sacrifice of the *puruṣa* in the process of world creation (RV 10, 90). Yet she finds Bose's idea as striking 'a slightly dramatic note not quite in keeping with the Indian spirit for whom tragedy has no place'.[28] This remark is off the mark, for if a spiritually advanced being undergoes suffering in order to help others, there may be in it a dramatic note, but it is quite in keeping with the Indian spirit—as the myth about churning the cosmic ocean and drinking the poison, or even the story of the Buddha's life before enlightenment and other instances show—but there certainly is no tragedy in it.

The approach to the interpretation of this hymn should be free from prejudice and preconceived ideas and theories about the evolution of religious experiences of mankind. All high religions recognize a transcendental and ultimate source of spirituality (be it called God, *ātman,* Tao, *nirvāṇa,* the Holy or any other name) which itself does not undergo evolution and can reveal itself or be experienced fully in different times and situations and in different stages of man's mental or intellectual development, without being linked together by any kind of evolutionary

process. The expressions and interpretations of such revelations or experiences of course vary according to the idiom current at different times and in different cultures, but they always point to the highest conceivable reality. This is true also of the hymn about the longhaired sage and that is why hardly any of its interpreters surveyed above could avoid expressing it in one way or another, even though in their overall evaluation they more or less belittled the achievement of the sage. So let us now piece together those valid and important observations of individual scholars so far quoted which give him credit for some special feature.

First of all, the hymn obviously portrays a phenomenon of great antiquity, as we are already assured by Oldenberg, despite the fact that the tenth book of the RV is considered to be of relatively late date. No one has ever challenged this point. Secondly, as Keith pointed out, the longhaired sage was not a student of the Brahminic tradition, which means that he lived, as Gonda put it, predominantly outside the Brahminic culture, a point also already made by Oldenberg. Thirdly, the longhaired sage impressed some scholars by what is indicated of his saintly life, leading to high spiritual achievements: Roth spoke of a life of sanctity by which the *muni* could attain to the fellowship of deities; Hauer admitted that he had great spiritual intuitions and, elevated above all terrestrial heaviness, arrived 'at cosmic expanse' (a high evaluation whatever he may have meant by it); Eliade recognized that his experiences transcended the sphere of the profane and were states of consciousness 'cosmic in structure' (yet another instance of a high appraisal whose exact meaning is not quite clear); and Miller credited him with mastery of life and of the 'two worlds of mind and matter' (her interpretation of the two oceans, the eastern and the western) as well as with 'penetrating into the spiritual world of cognition'. Last but not least, Ludwig saw in the longhaired sage a Yogi, Geldner also recognized in him 'all the external signs of Yogis' known from historical times and of the God Śiva worshipped in later Hinduism as Yogapati, the Lord of Yoga and, finally, Bose brought a soteriological element into the process of the interpretation of the hymn by suggesting that his drinking of poison symbolized taking the world's suffering on himself.

With the results of my precedessors in mind I would now proceed to the presentation of my own translation and discussion of the hymn:

1. The longhaired one carries within himself fire and poison and both heaven and earth. To look at him is like seeing heavenly brightness in its fullness. He is said to be light itself.
2. The sages, girdled with the wind, are clad in dust of yellow hue. They follow the path of the wind when the gods have penetrated them.
3. 'Uplifted by our sagehood we have ascended upon the winds. You mortals see just our bodies.'

4. The sage flies through the inner region, illuminating all forms below. Given to holy work he is the companion of every god.
5. Being the wind's horse, the Vāyu's companion and god-inspired, the sage is at home in both oceans, the eastern and the western.
6. Wandering in the track of celestial beings and sylvan beasts, the longhaired one, knowing their aspiration, is a sweet and most uplifting friend.
7. For him Vāyu churned, even pounded that which is hard to bend, as the longhaired one drank the poison with the cup, together with Rudra.

It may now be clear that the Vedas as religious scriptures are representative of one type of spiritual tradition which spread its message through familiar religious means. The hymn under scrutiny gives evidence of the existence of another ancient type of spiritual tradition which expressed itself in what we can call, using a term which appeared later, the Yogic way of life. This consisted in renouncing worldly life, abstaining from current forms of religious worship and practising a meditative approach to the transcendent. According to the evidence given by the followers of this tradition, this led to the shifting of their consciousness into the dimension of the spiritual which gave them access to a higher kind of knowledge of themselves, of the hidden reality and of other men and beings both superhuman and subhuman. As a result they were friends and helpers of others, possibly even assisting them spiritually by way of some kind of self-sacrifice.

The authorship of this hymn is clearly to be ascribed to someone belonging to the Vedic tradition who reported sympathetically and perhaps even with admiration about the longhaired sage, using of course the current mythological and symbolical images of the idiom of later Vedic time. This imagery is not as difficult to understand as it may seem at first glance and it is therefore possible to obtain a fairly clear picture of the longhaired sage and the tradition behind him as outlined above and as it will further emerge from the following analysis of the individual verses of the hymn step by step:

1. Carrying within oneself fire and poison, heaven and earth, is best explained as expressing the enormously wide scope of human experience, ranging from enthusiasm and creativity to depression and agony, from the heights of spiritual bliss to the heaviness of earthbound labour. This is true of man in general as well as our sage in particular, but the latter has mastered and transformed these contrary forces and is a visible embodiment of accomplished spirituality (*svar*) *:* he is said to be light or enlightenment itself.

2. Being fully anchored in spirituality, the longhaired sage does not live a normal life of convention. He spends long periods of time in silent absorption, musing or meditation (*man,*) and therefore he is called

'the silent one' (*muni*). The unconventional appearance of these sages is further marked by their attire; either they wear clothes of yellow rags fluttering in the wind or, much more likely, they go naked ('girdled with the wind'), clad only in the yellow dust of the Indian soil which may have been the origin of the usual colour of the later adopted traditional robes of Indian mendicants and Buddhist monks. But their personalities are not bound to earth, for they follow the path of the mysterious wind when the gods enter them. This can be regarded as a mythological and metaphorical description of someone who has reached, through meditation or progress on the spiritual path, a state of consciousness or a mode of existence on a higher plane or in another dimension which is free from earthly entanglements and invisible to ordinary people and is also associated with gods.

3. While the first two verses were descriptive, the third one is a quotation in which one of the sages confirms that through their silent meditation they, as spiritual personalities, have reached a different level of existence from that of other people who, as ordinary mortals, cannot see them as they really are, but see only their bodies. This is a hint that they themselves are no mere mortals but have reached the plane of immortality, an achievement desired and often prayed for by traditional Vedic worshippers as well (RV 5, 55, 4; 7, 59, 12; 9, 113, 11), but which was reliably attained only by the ancient pathfinder seers and by gods (RV 10, 56, 4).

4. This verse asserts that the sage moves in the inner dimension of reality (*antarikṣan*) where he perceives and understands 'all forms' i.e. the archetypes of everything that exists. He is dedicated only to worthwhile effort and can communicate with any god.

5. The imagery of this verse suggests that the sage is in tune with life at large, both as far as the biological vitality, the lower aspect of life, is concerned (being Vāta's 'horse') and (as Vāyu's companion) also with respect to the subtle aspect of the cosmic force of life. It follows from the previous verse that he has reached this situation by his dedication to some form of spiritual discipline, the only worthwhile task for men. No intervention of divine grace, help or assistance is mentioned, yet he is penetrated by the divine or is god-inspired and at home in both oceans, the eastern and the western, the east being a symbol for the world of light, spirit and wisdom, while the west symbolizes the world of darkness, matter and ignorance. The sage's mastery of both the worlds is reminiscent of the later notion of Mahāyāna *bodhisattvas* equally at home in *nirvāṇa* and *saṁsāra* .

6. The spiritual achievements of the longhaired sage enable him to follow the tracks of all beings, even the superhuman and the subhuman ones, to know their hearts and, by fully understanding them, to become their real friend and help them by uplifting them. This is yet another anticipation of a Buddhist notion, namely that of a 'beautiful' or spiritual friend (*kalyāna mitra,*) an expression used for the personal teacher occasionally in the Theravāda tradition (*kalyāna mitta,*) but mainly in Mahāyāna Buddhist

context where it was not influenced by the later Hindu image of a stern *guru*. The ability to read other beings' hearts is among the Yogic powers (*siddhis*) listed by Pataňjali as well as being a quality which was said to have been possessed by the Buddha in an unequalled measure and used by him particularly when instructing and helping his pupils and listeners on the path of their moral and spiritual progress and well-being.

7. This last verse of the hymn presents some real difficulties to interpreters, as the history of its misrepresentation testifies. Help is available if one draws on the materials contained in the Purāṇas. The image of churning and pounding connects this verse, as already mentioned earlier in this paper, with the Purāṇic myth of churning the cosmic ocean to obtain the drink of immortality. The Purāṇic myths, though usually recorded relatively late, have undoubtedly a long history and some may be very ancient indeed and therefore the allusion to one of them in the RV need not be surprising.[29] If one takes Vāyu to stand again for universal life, one may understand the first part of the verse as stating that having reached harmony with the universal life, the sage also reached immortality, the highest goal of spiritual life. The second part of the stanza then indicates that he did so while still active in ('drinking from') the stream of mortal (poisonous) life in the material world through having a material body (represented probably by the image of the cup). One can paraphrase the situation in Buddhist terminology: having realized *nirvāṇa*, he remains active in *saṁsāra* untouched by its defilements.

In the Purāṇic legend poison is released as a by-product during the process of churning the cosmic ocean, before the drink of immortality is won, and it thus symbolizes the unavoidable phenomenon of death within the manifested universe (*saṁsāra* is the realm of Māra). Only when death is overcome by one's spiritual power is true immortality obtained. The gods do not manage to do so in the legend. Only Śiva is capable of drinking the poison without harm and he is, significantly enough, the popular Hindu symbol of spiritual progress through Yoga. As the Vedic Rudra was the same as or developed into Śiva, the image of drinking poison in his company suggests the spiritual achievement gained by Yoga and as Śiva saved by his deed the gods and other beings from the deadly poison, the image suggests also the idea of assistance which the longhaired sage gives or is capable of offering to others. But he does not do so as a saviour, as Bose would have it, for he is not and has not become a god or divine incarnation; he is still a man who has reached accomplishment and thereby the realms of immortality, but who can only assist the world rather than save it, an idea which again points in the direction of the later Mahāyāna Buddhist teachings as expressed in the Bodhisattva doctrine.

Thus what clearly emerges from this unique hymn is a picture, not of an orgiastic drug-addict, but of the noble figure of a spiritual hero, an ideal

which has been the focal point of spiritual aspirations in India throughout millenia and which has retained its appeal up to the present day.

APPENDIX

Discussion of the text

The text is taken from Th. Aufrecht, *Die Hymnen des Rigveda I-II*, 2nd ed. Bonn 1877.

1. Keśy àgním keśí viṣám keśí bibharti ródasī/
   keśí víśvam svàr dṛśé keśīdám jyótir ucyate//

bhṛ, bibharti I used one of the equivalents given in H.Grassmann's dictionary (*Wörterbuch zum Ṛig-Veda*, Leipzig 1873) as *'eine Eigenschaft oder Kraft in sich tragen'* (although Grassmann himself renders the word in his translation of the hymn *'trägt erhaltend'* which I consider inadequate, as is the whole translation of the hymn by him added only in an appendix in prose, while the bulk of the hymns was translated by him in verses. See his *Rig- Veda I-II*, Leipzig 1877, vol. 2, p. 499). Supporting evidence for my translation is 10, 84, 6: sáho ***bibharṣi*** and 10, 39, 10: *ásāmy ójo bibharthā;* also 10, 27, 16: *gárbham* ***mātā́*** *…bibharti*.

agni symbolizes here the flame of creativity, the eternal source of manifestation.

viṣa moisture, water, poison; the last meaning is undoubtedly appropriate here as it achieves the necessary contrast and is consistent with verse 7. Poison symbolizes the dark side of existence in the world of suffering ruled by death, later called ***saṁsāra***. Water would fit in, too, if understood as the symbol of the unconscious or subconscious stream of mental existence, harbouring the monsters of dark urges and destructive instincts.

rodasī is a dual form designating the two worlds, the higher and the lower, heaven and earth, its root *rud* meaning, significantly enough, 'to shine' as well as 'to weep'. This stands again for the spiritual and material life as do the previous two symbols. As explained earlier, these two sides of existence have been mastered by the longhaired sage. H.Bailey suggests a philological interpretation of *rodasī* as 'two surfaces' ('Indo-Iranica', p. 326, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, XII [1947], pp. 319–32). This suits the mythological picture of heaven and earth as two parts of the shell of the 'primeval egg' and also its figurative meaning as the 'two levels'

or, better, ‘two planes’ of existence, the higher and the lower, i.e. the spiritual and the material.

svar meaning brightness, light, splendour, bliss, happiness and also the sun, bright space and bright sky; it symbolizes the highest realm, possibly the ‘element’ of enlightenment itself.

jyoti light, also inner light, insight, enlightenment.

2. Múnayo vā́taraśanāḥ piśánga vasate málā/
vā́tasyā̀nu dhrā̀jim yanti yád devā́so ávikṣata //

muni Grassman translates *Büsser* which is not even compatible with his own dictionary which gives *ein Begeisterter, Verzückter*. The last expression was used by Oldenberg and Geldner, but it was not a happy choice. The English equivalent would be ‘the ecstatic’ and it does not convey the root meaning of the word pointing as it does to a silent meditative life (*mauneya*). In the absence of a congenial English expression ‘sage’ seems to be the best rendering.

vātaraśana girdled with the wind. It probably indicates that they did not wear any girdles, because, going naked, they did not need them, the wind blowing round their naked waists.

mala taken as a noun in Instr. Sg., it means that the sages were wrapped in dirt, dust or soil whose predominant colour was *piśanga*, yellow, which is still true of the Indian plains. This again indicates that they went about naked. Miller suggests that it could mean that the sages ‘have donned the perishable vehicle of earth, the body, with all its impurities’ (Reappraisal, p. 104) which is not altogether impossible. Most translators obviously take *mala* to be an adjective in the Acc. Pl., in which case ‘robes’ has to be supplemented and we get the traditional yellow robe of Hindu and Buddhist mendicants. This is, however, not at all necessary. In view of the ancient custom of Jain ascetics to go naked which survived with their *digambara* sect till modern times, most ancient unorthodox sages were most likely following the same trend.

devaso avikṣata Griffith’s translation ‘where gods have gone before’ is more appealing, but there does not seem to be grammatical support for it, as *yad* stands for ‘when’ and not ‘where’. The overall sense of the verse is practically the same in either case, expressing the capacity of the sages to communicate on the level or in the dimension of divine intelligences. This is the path of the wind, the ‘breath of gods’.

3. Únmaditā maúneyena vā́tān ā́tasthimā vayám/
śárīréd asmā́kam yūyám mártāso abhípaśyatha//

mauna the achievement or status of being a *muni*. It obviously points to an inner, spiritual state of being. The most likely equivalent in the Yoga terminology of later times is *samādhi*.

4. Antárikṣena patati víśvā rūpávacákaśat /
múnir devásya devasya saúkṛtyāya sákhā hitáḥ //

antarikṣan although the usual rendering is the 'interim region' between heaven and earth and therefore often 'atmosphere' or even 'air', the only possible meaning here is the 'inner region' or the spiritual dimension of reality which overlaps with the unconscious part of the psyche into which the sage can 'fly', i.e. which has become accessible to him consciously through the meditational shift of his consciousness (*mauneyena*). Here Grassmann's interpretation of *antar (i) (Grundbe griff: ins Innere dringend oder im Innern befindlich*) points in the right direction. Dandekar drew attention to AV 1, 32 ('Universe in Vedic Thought', pp. 109–10, *India Maior,* Leiden 1972, pp. 91–114), a hymn which glorifies *antarikṣan* as the sphere of life-giving potencies. It also seems to say that *antarikṣan* is the place where those who are weary (asleep?) rest. All this strongly supports my interpretation.

kāś to illuminate; the prefix *ava*—indicates that the action comes from above: the sage illuminates the contents of the unconscious from the superior position of an enlightened one. As the individual unconscious overlaps with the cosmic inner region or dimension which contains the seeds or archetypal forms, one can see in this the oldest hint at what developed into *ālaya vijňāna* of the Vijňānavāda school of Buddhism.

saukṛtya literally 'good work', means good work *par excellence,* i.e. 'holy work', the work of spiritual achievement which is the only real work to be done (*karaṇīya* of the Pāli *suttas*).

hita p.p. of *dhā* 'to put, give, dedicate'.

5. Vấtasyấśvo vāyóḥ sākhấtho devéṣito múniḥ /
ubhaù samudrấv ấkṣeti yáś ca pūrva utấparaḥ //

vātasya-aśva the image 'wind's horse' makes sense when we take 'wind' to be symbolical of life-force (and thus connected by meaning with *prāṇa*). Then the image of the horse immediately suggests the life-force flowing through a powerful tool or vehicle by which it comes to be manifested. There are reasons to view *Vāta* as the lower aspect of *Vāyu,* both words having the same meaning. That is why I regard *Vāta* as representing the lower, biological, force which is

apparently fully at the sage's disposal, and *Vāyu* the higher life's force or the very essence of life with which the sage is in harmony.

samudra the image of the ocean, usually meaning the 'cosmic ocean', i.e. the space in its entirety, including the inner space, stands in the Vedas and virtually all of Indian mythology for 'spheres of existence' and for layers of the mind, both cosmic and individual, since they overlap (cf. also RV 1, 159, 4). The interpretation of 'eastern' as 'spiritual' and 'western' as 'material' is supported also by the fact that *pūrva* also means 'upper' (particularly in compounds, like *pūrvakāya,* the upper part of the body) and that *apara* then means 'low' or even 'inferior'.

6. Apsarásām gandharvā́nām mṛgā́nām cáraṇe cáran/
kesī́ kétasya vidvā́n sákhā svādúr madítamaḥ //

keta from the root *kit=cit* expresses the dynamic drive of the mind or heart, hence it means 'will, intention, desire, inclination, motivation, aspiration' (Pāli *cetanā* is also used in this sense); the expression *ketasya vidvān* no doubt means that he knows his own heart's movements as well as the longings and aspirations or motivations of other beings. This is further strengthened by the phrase 'wandering in their track' which has also the figurative meaning of being able to trace them mentally which is a *siddhi* called *dibba cakkhu* in the Pāli Canon.

7. Vāyúr asmā úpāmanthat pináṣṭi smā kunannamā́ /
kesī́ viṣásya pā̆treṇa yád rudréṇā́pibat sahá//

kunannama based on the intensive form of the verb *nam* 'to bend'. Geldner suggested the translation *die hässlich Gekrümte* (which is highly improbable) and considered it the name of a female demon or fairy, but had no reasons for his view to offer (similarly Renou; Maurer also followed suit). He elaborated, again without substantiation, by saying that she helped Vāyu to prepare the magic potion for the longhaired sage. Since no such fairy is known from anywhere else, his suggestion can be dismissed as little more than pure speculation. He of course takes *kunannamā* to be Nom. Sg. fem. as did Wilson before him, following Sāyana, and translating it 'the inflexible', meaning—in agreement with his naturalistic interpretation of the hymn—'thunder'. Others, such as Ludwig, Grassmann and Griffith, take it as Acc. and so do I.

pātra vessel, cup, container, also mother's womb and river-bed and hence, figuratively, a material body (as a container for the poison of

the saṁsāric stream of life). The image of drinking the poison with a cup thus suggests that the body is deliberately used by the sage to go on partaking in saṁsāric life for a special purpose which is indicated by the reference to Rudra evoking the myth about the churning of the cosmic ocean and Śiva drinking the poison (to save others) as originally pointed out by Ludwig.

NOTES

1 This date is based on the ingenious calculations of Max Müller, *History of Ancient Sanskrit Literature*, London 1859 (repr. 1860, 1912, 1926), p. 70ff. whose time-scale for the composition of Vedic literature has not yet found a serious challenger. There are, however, voices which, while accepting as the time of the composition of the Ṛgvedic hymns the period between 1500 and 1000 B.C., are inclined to place the date of final codification later, but in any event before 600 B.C. Cf. Jan Gonda, *Vedic Literature,* Wiesbaden 1975, p. 15 and 22.
2 V.G. Rahurkar, *The Seers of the Rgveda,* Poona 1964, pp. XV-XVI.
3 Alex Wayman, 'Two Traditions of India—Truth and Silence', *Philosophy East and West,* XXIV (1974), pp. 389–403.
4 *Pinnacles of India's Past. Selections from the Rgveda,* trans. & annot. by Walter H.Maurer (professor of Sanskrit at the University of Hawaii at Manoa), Amsterdam/Philadelphia 1986, p. 4. The translation and interpretation is on pp. 316–18.
5 Lakshman Sarup, *Yāska, Nighanta and Nirukta,* Oxford 1921, vol. 6, p. 192.
6 H.H.Wilson, *Ṛig-Veda Saṁhita*, 10 vols, London 1866–1888. His translation of the hymn as dedicated to the sun is in vol. 6, pp. 364–5.
7 M.Bloomfield, 'Contributions to the Interpretation of the Veda. The Two Dogs of Yama in a New Role', *Journal of the American Oriental Society,* XV (1893).
8 *The Hymns of the Rigveda,* 2 vols. trans. with a popular commentary by Ralph T.H.Griffith, 2nd ed. Benares 1896–7, vol. 2, p. 582. In fact he does not quote Roth from his original work, but takes the quotation from J. Muir, *Original Sanskrit Texts,* part IV, p. 319. I do not quote from the work of Ludwig and Grassmann at this stage, because they did not produce full interpretations of the hymn with their translations. But their translations or brief commnets will be taken account of later on.
9 Hermann Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda,* 5th ed., Darmstadt 1970, pp. 404–5 (1st ed. 1894).
10 Ibid., p. 404.
11 Cf. my paper 'The Vedic Concept of Human Personality', pp. 283–4, *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 5 (1978), pp. 275–89.

12 Oldenberg, op. cit. p. 405.
13 A.Hillebrandt, *Lieder des Rgveda,* Göttingen 1913, pp. 156ff. E. Arbman, *Rudra—Untersuchungen zum altindischen Glauben und Kultur,* Uppsala 1922, pp. 298ff. H.D.Griswold, *The Religion of the Rigveda,* London 1923, p. 339.
14 A.B.Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and the Upanishads,* repr. Delhi 1970, p. 401, note 7 (first pub. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard U.P. 1925).
15 J.W.Hauer, *Der Yoga, ein indischer Weg zum Selbst,* Stuttgart 1958, pp. 29–31. This book replaced the one criticized by Keith which was originally Hauer's doctoral thesis submitted in Tübingen 1917 and published as *Die Anfänge der Yogapraxis im alten Indien,* Stuttgart 1922. Hauer's later research on Vrātyas was published as *Der Vrātya. Untersuchungen über die nichtbrahmanische Religion Altindiens,* Stuttgart 1927.
16 Keith, op. cit. p. 402.
17 M.Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom,* 2nd ed. London 1969 (1st ed. 1958, French orig. 1954), see the Foreword.
18 Ibid., pp. 102–3.
19 Ibid., pp. 85–7.
20 Jan Gonda, *Die Religionen Indiens, I, Veda und älterer Hinduismus,* Stuttgart 1960, p. 109.
21 Ibid., p. 184.
22 R.N.Dandekar, 'Rudra in the Veda', *Journal of the University of Poona,* vol. I (1953), pp. 99.
23 F.Staal, *Exploring Mysticism,* Harmondsworth 1975, pp. 185–92.
24 K.F.Geldner, *Der Rig-Veda,* 3 vols., Cambridge, Mass., Harvard U.P. 1951, vol. 3, p. 369.
25 *Der Rigveda oder die heiligen Hymnen der Brahmana,* zum ersten male vollstandig ins Deutsche übersetzt mit Commentar und Einleitung von Alfred Ludwig, 6 vols, Prag 1878–88, vol. 5, p. 553.
26 H.D.Sharma, *Contributions to the History of Brahmanical Asceticism,* Poona 1939, p. 19.
27 J.Miller, 'Forerunners of Yoga: the *Késin* Hymn', *A Reappraisal of Yoga,* by G.Feuerstein and J.Miller, London 1971. pp. 95–120.
28 Ibid. p. 120, where she quotes A.C.Bose, *Hymns from the Vedas,* London 1966, p. 157.
29 A short version of this myth is given in: A.K.Coomaraswamy and Sister Nivedita, *Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists.* New York 1967 (first pub. 1913), pp. 314–16. A longer version is given in: H.Zimmer, *Maya, der indische Mythos,* Zurich 1952, pp. 101–19. A translation of the section on churning the ocean in the Padma Purāṇa is included in: H.v. Glasenapp, *Indische Geisteswelt* I, Wiesbaden (date not given), pp. 100–4.

4
MYSTICISM IN THE UPANIṢADS AND IN ŚANKARA'S VEDĀNTA

Pratima Bowes

The term 'mysticism' suggests a view about ultimate reality in which this reality is known in direct experience and about the relation of this reality to the world in our ordinary experience which is based on sense perception, intellection and various processes of reasoning involved in intellection.

No equivalent of the term 'mysticism' exists in Sanskrit and its use with regard to what we find in the Upaniṣads may be misleading: The dominant philosophical tradition in the West insists that the term is non-cognitive so that it has no place in any epistemological investigation, cognition being defined as knowing by sense perception and reasoning. But as far as the Upaniṣads are concerned, the fact that mystical viewing of reality is not a process of intellection does not mean that what we know in such viewing is only a state of feeling and not of knowledge.

Mystical viewing amounts to what we call direct experience, in English usually termed 'intuition'. It is accepted that it may illumine life in some way, but what it delivers does not qualify for the name 'knowledge'. But the Upaniṣadic teachers claim that what they know in such experience is knowledge (*vidyā,*) indeed such knowledge is higher (*para*) compared to the knowledge derived from sense perception and reasoning which is called lower (*apara*). It is higher because the understanding of reality one gets here is such that it can illumine any other kind of understanding of reality that we have. It is also higher because experience here is not indirect, not 'knowledge about', but 'knowing by being': there is no distance between the reality known and the knowledge of it, no intermediaries like the senses and the intellect. This is expressed by such Sanskrit terms as *tādātmya* or *tadākārita :* one knows something because one is it or becomes it. A mundane example of the difference is knowing hunger by being hungry as distinct from knowing it by watching someone who behaves in a fashion that is indicative of hunger.

The human capacity that enables one to be conscious of reality in this direct fashion is called in Sanskrit *bodhi* as distinct from the term *buddhi* (intellect) which knows that something is so and so by making it an object of investigation to which one turns one's attention as an investigating

subject. The term *bodhi* was used in this sense in Mahāyāna philosophical literature for expounding its own non-dualism. Upaniṣads, not being technical philosophy, do not actually use a special term for direct knowledge, except in KU where the phrase *pratibodha viditam* occurs in that sense.

I feel justified in using the Buddhist term *bodhi* for direct knowledge in the Upaniṣads, because it appears later also in Hindu literature. Buddhism shared a common cultural background with the rest of the spiritual-religious thinking in India and many other terms were so shared, especially between Mādhyamika and Yogācāra varieties of Buddhism and Hindu Advaitism. The point is to stress that mystical viewing is knowledge, because human beings, participating in *ātman* or the principle of conscious functioning that is itself self-conscious, are equipped with the capacity to know things directly just as they are equipped with the senses and the intellect to know about things.

Since ultimate reality can only be one, some people believe that all mystical experience must be the same, although its interpretations may differ in different cultures. I do not share that view and believe that there are descriptions of different types of mystical experiences even in the Upaniṣads. If the reality being experienced by X, Y and Z in common is the same in some genuine sense of 'same', it does not mean that X, Y and Z necessarily have the same experience of it. The one and the same man, Mr Smith, is experienced by his wife, children, friends, neighbours, employees and competitors, but not only can their accounts of what Mr Smith is like as a person differ, they can have genuinely different experiences of him each of which is valid. This is so because Mr Smith, although one person, has many facets and experiencing him involves one or more of these facets.

Only when a simple thing like a mathematical point is involved can it be said that the content of different experiences of the same thing be thought to be the same, in the sense of being carbon copies. What is called ultimate reality is acknowledged to be infinite, i.e. beyond all measure of whatever magnification can be devised by the human mind, and absolute, i.e. not limited by the reality of anything else on which its being would be dependent in some fashion—that is to say, limitless. Surely, a reality like that should not be thought to be one thing or as simple as a mathematical point, and there must be more than one way of experiencing it which is genuine and valid if there is more than one way even in respect of things which are finite and limited.

The unity and oneness of the ultimate reality is in no way impugned because men experience it in diverse ways just as the unity and oneness of Mr Smith is not in jeopardy because different people experience him differently.

In a scheme where mystical experience means God's self-revelation to man there may be some justification for claiming that there is only one kind

of valid mystical experience, other kinds being spurious (as Zaehner thought). But the Upaniṣadic experiences are not of this kind and there is no reason why in their context a variety of experiences, all genuine and valid, cannot be permitted.

Then there is also, of course, a difference between Upaniṣadic non-dualism, which gives one kind of account of the relationship between the ultimate and the phenomenal reality, and between non-duality of the Śankara's variety, which gives quite a different account of this relationship. This difference is rooted in the fact that Śankara believes that the experience of the ultimate can be of only one kind, the kind in which the phenomenal world disappears. So all our other experiences, that of phenomenal diversity included, must be of the nature of illusion from the point of ultimate truth. But the Upaniṣads, which base their judgement on two different kinds of experiences, find room also for phenomenal diversity within the realms of truth, as will be shown later on, although this is not often realized by scholars who make their way to the Upaniṣads through Śankara's interpretation of them.

One of the terms for the ultimate in the Upaniṣads is *brahman* which Danielou translates as the 'divine immensity', and this gives something of the flavour of the root *bṛh*, to grow, from which this term is derived. The choice of this root to designate the ultimate is telling, because it suggests that the ultimate does not have to be conceived as something static, finished or fixed, as one unambiguous thing. It suggests further that its limitlessness can hold together both the idea of being that neither originates nor comes to an end, and of becoming, i.e. of changing forms that do originate and end, however one's rational faculty may be revolted by this double inclusion, as Śankara's was.

We can, of course, by some effort of imagination picture all becoming as happening within the bosom of being—a mundane analogy of which would be what happens when a piece of near-solidified jelly is given a shake. But in the end we have to accept, as mystical views insist, that the ultimate holds together opposing properties which reason finds paradoxical and so insists that mystical perception of the ultimate or the account given of it, or both, are muddled.

This is understandable if we consider the function of reason as a specific type of human faculty. I will now make a slight digression and say something about reason and its function in view of the problem that is posed by the rational requirement that language be used in a certain way.

The task of reason is to discriminate between things and this can best be done through directing one's attention to opposing qualities which are the lynch-pin, so to say, of all discriminative activity. No doubt reality lends itself to such understanding, but if we believe that it also lends itself to the *bodhi* kind of understanding, then things which are opposite and remain separate on one kind of count, namely that of reason, come together on

another count where all things, including opposites, make a totality of a kind which is able to hold them together; we have a mundane example of this in our experience of an aesthetic whole.

Our understanding of language operates at the level of reason where to say that something is stationary is to say that it is not moving. In fact, most of the use of language is in aid of this kind of discrimination. If the same language with its built-in discriminative attitude is applied to a mystical experience with its famous lack of discriminative boundaries, the result is a certain kind of tension.

Being human, we find that we have to use language, but language is so fashioned that when we use it in respect of a mystical experience we appear to be talking nonsense. So we say that this experience is indescribable even though we continue to describe it through a paradoxical use of language. We have no choice of not using language in respect of what we experience. The way out of this impasse is to recognize that a paradoxical use of language is a genuine use of it when it comes to mystical experience. Reality in that region is such that it can hold together opposing qualities, and it is because we feel in some ways justified in this pursuit that we also say that ultimate reality transcends reason.

Transcending reason does not necessarily mean transcending all understanding with respect to opposites which are discriminated in some contexts while they are seen to come together in others.

If we do see this, then the demand of reason that if we say that something is moving, we must not say, at the same time, that it is at rest is not to be put up as the ultimate criterion of truth; it is acceptable only for phenomenal purposes where discriminations of this kind are integral to the living process.

I shall not have the opportunity within the scope of this paper to show this fully, but it is clear to me that Śankara's highly developed sense of rational requirements made him uneasy with the paradoxical statements of the Upaniṣads and he tried hard to put them in a logical system with a view to divesting them of their paradoxicality. Like all logical systems his system, too, involves a gap which cannot be justified in terms of itself. Śankara's logical operations on the Upaniṣads have, to my mind, divested them not only of paradoxicality, but also of the most significant message they carry, namely their affirmation that all things in their particularity participate in the nature of the ultimate reality as the infinite and the limitless.

The other term used in the Upaniṣads to indicate the nature of the ultimate is *ātman*. Its translation as 'ego' or 'soul' or even as the 'soul of the universe' is a deplorable misreading. It is also almost wilful, for the literature is replete with statements which clearly show *ātman* to be nothing of the kind. The equation *ātman* = *brahman* makes it abundantly clear that it is not an individual entity, indeed entity of any sort, since it has no space-time connotation. Terms used to describe it (*cit*, *prajňāna-ghana* etc.) show

that it is of the nature of pure consciousness which is conscious of itself and that it is not a conscious state or process which is taking place in an individual mind. Unlike the individual mind, it has no intentional object of any kind towards which it would be directed, but it is the very principle of conscious awareness and as such it is self-aware. In accordance with its functioning an individual knows an object as well as himself as the subject of that knowledge.

We, as particular egos or personalities, are *ātman* in the sense that we participate in this mode of functioning and not in the sense that some kind of spiritual substance is lodged in our bodies which we could claim as our individual property. The statement *aham brahmāsmi* (I am Brahman) does not mean that *brahman* is my personal property. Nor does it mean that it constitutes my personal ego. The *ātman,* like *brahman,* is infinite, not measurable in the way in which a particular state of mind (*cetana* as distinct from *cit*) may be measured according to some criterion. The *ātman* is absolute, i.e. limitless as a pure function of awareness, itself self-aware. It is not just a conscious mental state which is, of course, limited by other states.

The *ātman* neither comes into being nor ever goes out of existence, being ever there. It may help to think of it as energy in its spiritual dimension, as efficiency that has no space-time connotation, hence unknowable by methods which are devised to catch things which do have space-time connotations. That does not, of course, mean that it is unknowable, for it is the very principle of knowability in its character as self-aware.

The identification of *ātman* with *brahman* shows how the ultimate can have self-existent being, a being of self-awareness which needs nothing else to be there. And in this sense of completeness of being it is also *ānanda,* often translated as bliss, but better as delight. (It is only a sense of lack or of a gap that causes fall from delight of being.)

Upaniṣads say that *brahman* is 'all this' and that holds for *ātman* too. Therefore energy in its spiritual dimension, conceived as cit, is not discontinuous with energy that goes into the evolution of the phenomenal world. Because it is 'all this', it is the same energy everywhere which expresses itself differently at different levels of being. Five of them are mentioned: the physical, the vital, the mental, the conscious and that of bliss (spiritual).

Brahman is further referred to also as fourfold (in BU, CU, MaU) and this is, therefore, also true of *ātman (Sarvam hy etad brahma, ayam ātma brahma, so 'yam ātma catuṣpat :* All this is brahman, ātman is *brahman,* so *ātman* is four-footed). These four feet are: (1) The waking state and the world of its experience; (2) the state of dream with its shadowy dream objects; (3) the state of deep sleep where there is no object consciousness, but 'consciousness-mass' exists in its own being—an inkling of it is a sense of well-being when one wakes up from deep sleep; finally (4) there is the

fourth state called *turīya* which is above all this; in it everything becomes one (*advaitam*) beyond the distinction of conscious and unconscious and is unthinkable, unspeakable etc,

Ātman is thus not to be identified exclusively with its ultimate state of being beyond all distinctions, nor even as pure consciousness (cit), a description most often resorted to, but it is to be seen at work in phenomenal and dream reality as well. It is only the fourth stage which absorbs all distinctions, but it does not negate them as operating at lower levels; this also has to be experienced if *ātman* is to be known in the fullness of its being as the ultimate reality. '[*Turīya* is] not that which cognizes the internal [objects], not that which cognizes the external [objects], not what cognizes both of them, not a mass of cognition, not cognitive, not non-cognitive' (MaU, 7).[1] Because *ātman* is all, this same 'indescribable' infinite energy brings forth, by an act of voluntary self-limitation, the finite and the limited world within the expanse of its own limitless being.

The BU talks about two forms of reality: 'Verily there are two forms of *brahman,* the formed and the formless, the mortal and the immortal, the unmoving and the moving, the manifest existent (*sat*) and the unmanifest that (*tat*) ' (BU 2, 3, l).[2] I believe that this twofold nature of *brahman* or the two modes of its being are talked about on the basis of actual experience of *brahman* as both formed and formless, as the quotations below will show. The idea is not that there are two *brahmans,* but that the same *brahman* has opposite characteristics to be realized in distinctive types of mystical experience, and the fact that such opposing experiences of the same reality are possible is itself a mystical realization.

First the formless. This is an experience of infinite and limitless being wherein all particulars are absorbed, including the separate sense of the experiencing subject, so that this experience cannot properly be said to qualify as knowledge or consciousness. It cannot be described, because the language of description requires that there be a reality which is limited by the presence of another for the sake of description. To begin with the experiencing subject takes his stand on the world of plurality of which he is conscious, but then it disappears into indifferentiation and loses its separate identity: 'As these flowing rivers tending towards the ocean, on reaching the ocean, disappear, their name-shape broken up, and are called simply the ocean, even so of this seer, these sixteen parts tending towards the person, on reaching the person, disappear, their name-shape broken up, and are called simply the person. That one is without parts, immortal' (PU 6, 5).[3]

This formless experience is described by Yājňavalkya to Maitreyi: '"As a lump of salt thrown in water becomes dissolved in water and there would not be any of it to seize forth as it were, but wherever one may take it it is salty indeed, so, verily, this great being, infinite, limitless, consists of nothing but knowledge. Arising from out of these elements one vanishes away into them. When he has departed there is no more knowledge." Then

said Maitreyi: "In this, indeed you have bewildered me, Venerable Sir, by saying that when he has departed there is no more knowledge". Then Yājňavalya said: "Certainly I am not saying anything bewildering…For where there is duality as it were, there one smells another, there one sees another…Where…everything has become the self, then by what and whom should one smell…hear…by what and whom should one understand? By what should one know that by which all this is known? By what, my dear, should one know the knower?"' (BU 2, 4, 13–14).[4]

'There (in that state) a father is not a father, a mother is not a mother, the worlds are not the worlds, the gods are not the gods, the Vedas are not the Vedas. There a thief is not a thief…an ascetic not an ascetic. He is not followed by good, he is not followed by evil, for then he has passed beyond all the sorrows of the heart' (BU 4, 3, 22).[5]

To give the final example of the undifferentiated: 'That, O Gārgī, the knowers of *brahman* call the imperishable. It is neither gross nor fine, neither short nor long…neither shadow nor darkness, neither air nor space, unattached, without taste…without eyes…without measure, having no within and no without. It eats nothing and no one eats it' (BU 3, 8, 8). 'Verily that imperishable, O Gārgī, is unseen but is the seer, is unheard but is the hearer, unthought but is the thinker, unknown but is the knower. There is no other seer but this, no other hearer but this, no other thinker but this, no other knower but this. By this imperishable, O Gārgī, is space woven like warp and woof' (BU 3, 8, 11).[6]

The experience of this undifferentiated formless *brahman* is by its very nature non-dual in the sense of there being not two things to be experienced. But the same Upaniṣads give also another account of the *brahman* experience which is not non-dual in the sense that there is no second thing present in experience, but in the sense that all things in their particularity are actually seen as permeated by the same essence which is *ātman* or *brahman*. They are non-dual with it as the waves of the sea are non-dual with the sea, although seen also as separate items.

This non-duality of essence comes from the fact that *brahman* actually becomes the world to enjoy diversity through differences of name, shape and work. 'In the beginning the world was only self, in the shape of a person…He had no delight…He desired a second. He became as large as a woman and a man in close embrace' (BU 1, 4, 1 & 3). 'Now this self is the world of all beings…of the gods…of the seers…of the fathers…of men…of animals' (BU 1, 4, 16).[7]

'There was nothing whatsoever here in the beginning…He created the mind, thinking "let me have a self" (mind). Then he moved about, worshipping. From him, thus worshipping, water was produced…He divided himself threefold—fire…sun…and air…' (BU 1, 2, 1 & 3). 'At that time it (*brahman*) was undifferentiated. It became differentiated by the

name and form. Therefore even today all this is differentiated by the name and form' (BU 1, 4, 7).[8]

There are many statements throughout the Upaniṣads in which *brahman* or *ātman* is identified with 'this all', because it becomes this all. In addition there are many accounts which suggest an actual mystical experience of diversity issuing forth from a primal unity which as an experience is the very opposite of the one discussed earlier. *Brahman* becomes differentiated as the world while remaining inexhaustible as the unity that is holding forth all these phenomenal differences within its limitless being.

'As a spider sends forth and draws in (its thread), as herbs grow on the earth, as hair (grows) on the head and the body of a living person, so from the imperishable arises here the universe' (MuU 1, 1, 7). 'As from a lighted fire laid with damp fuel, various (clouds of) smoke issue forth, even so, my dear, the Ṛg Veda, the Yajur Veda, the Sāma Veda, Atharvāngirasa, history, ancient lore, sciences, Upaniṣads, verses, aphorisms, explanations and commentaries. From it, indeed, are all these breathed forth' (BU 2, 4, 10).

'And he who sees all beings in self and the self in all beings shrinks from nothing' (IU, 7).[9]

'The self is indeed *brahman*, consisting of understanding, mind, life, sight, hearing, earth, water, air, ether, light and no light, desire and absence of desire, anger and absence of anger, righteousness and absence of righteousness and all things' (BU 4, 4, 5). 'He desired, let me become many, let me be born. He performed austerity…created all this…entered into it…(and) became both the actual and the beyond, the defined and the undefined, both the founded and the non-founded, the intelligent and the non-ingelligent, the true and the untrue. As the real he became whatever there is here, that is what they call the real' (TaU 2, 6, 1).[10]

Lastly: 'The self verily is the lord of all beings, the king of all kings. As all spokes are held together in the hub and felly of a wheel just so in the self all beings, all gods, all worlds, all breathing creatures, all these things are held together'. This can be realized in a mystical experience of one becoming the many, but not through rational discourse, as the following conversation makes clear:

Uṣasta Cākrāyaṇa said: "This has been explained by you in the manner as one explains: 'This is a cow, this is a horse.' Explain to me properly the *brahman* that is immediately present and directly perceived, that (you say) is the self in all things." Yājňavalkya: "That is your self which is within all things." Cākrāyaṇa: "Which is within all things, Yājňavalkya?" Yājňavalkya: "You cannot see the seer of seeing…hear the hearer of hearing…think the thinker of thinking…understand the understander of understanding. He is your self which is in all things. Everything else is afflicted." Thereupon Uṣasta Cākrāyaṇa kept silent' (BU, 3, 4, 2).[11]

Thus the mystical experience of all things issuing out of *brahman* or *ātman* does not see it diminished in its character as the infinite and limitless being. Nor does the non-duality of man and of all things with the ultimate, proclaimed in the CU in such statements as 'that though art', suggest in the context of this type of mystical experience that manyness disappears when its unity with the one is realized. 'Now the light which shines above this heaven, above all, above everything, in the highest world beyond which there is no higher, verily, that is the same light as this light which is here within this person' (CU 3, 13, 7).[12]

When we come to Śankara the significance of the term 'non-dualism' changes its meaning. It no longer means that there is no duality of essence in things despite their manyness as they all arise out of the same ultimate reality (*brahman* or *ātman*) like pots and figurines made out of clay. With Śankara it means literally that there are no two things so that reality cannot be dualistic. In truth only *brahman* exists, the rest is illusion or at best a mixture of truth and falsity, but certainly not true in the full sense of the term. His reasons for holding this position are given in a closely argued philosophical treatise, *Brahmasūtrabhāṣya*, in the usual logical way: If one said both this and that, one would contradict oneself; if it is this, it cannot be that; and so it goes on. This is certainly not the way of the mystic and no such arguments appear in the Upaniṣads. If Śankara ever had mystical experience, it was only the kind where plurality disappears into undifferentiated unity. He certainly did not have the mystical realization of the opposite kind where the one differentiates itself into the many so often talked about in the Upaniṣads. His logical mind finds the concepts 'one' and 'many' to be opposites, hence both cannot be true, and since the 'one' is true, the 'many' is illusory.

Śankara treats the Upaniṣadic statement '*sarvaṁ* khalvidam brahma' (everything here is *brahman*) as saying that everything does not exist as everything; only *brahman* exists and everything appears as existing only through being generated by some illusive power called *māyā* and then superimposed on *brahman*, the sole reality, by the human mind soaked in ignorance. In other words, if *māyā* and ignorance were not there, *brahman* would be everywhere in full and not in its many expressions as the Upaniṣads have it. (*Māyā*, incidentally, is not to be thought of as *brahman's* creative power, as most Hindu thinking does, because it is illusive.)

It is easy to see that this conception of reality corresponds to the kind of mystical experience illustrated by the image of rivers entering the sea, abandoning the name and form, with only sea remaining wherever one looks. Not having the other kind of experience illustrated by sparks coming out of the same fire, smoke shapes issuing from the same damp fuel or many spokes held together by the same hub and felly of the wheel, Śankara was unable to think that the many which disappear into the one could really be genuine expressions of it, nor that as expressions they could still be

non-dualistic with reality as waves with the sea. So he produced logical arguments to show why the existence of the many, experienced by us in common, must have an illusory status, albeit of a cosmic nature, explaining away all statements to the effect that *brahman* becomes all that through the activity of Īśvara, the creator God, who, however, is himself generated by cosmic illusion.

Śankara argues as follows: 'But—it might be objected that *brahman* has in itself elements of manifoldness. As the tree has many branches, so *brahman* possesses many powers and energies dependent on these powers. Unity and manifoldness are therefore both true. Thus a tree considered in itself is one, but it is manifold if viewed as having branches; so the sea is itself one, but manifold as having waves and form; so the clay itself is one, but manifold if viewed with regard to the jars and dishes made of it…This theory, we reply, is untenable, because in the instance (quoted in the Upaniṣads) the phrase "as clay they are true" asserts the cause only to be true while the phrase "having its origin in speech" declares the unreality of all effects.'[13]

This is a classic example of philosophers twisting a statement so as to make it yield the meaning they want. In the Upaniṣads the realm of manyness is associated with the name and form, and this is quite unexceptionable, because the recognition of the many as particulars (at least of the kind of recognition human beings have) needs language. But nowhere has it been said that having a name means unreality. The alleged instance occurs in CU (6, 1, 4) which properly translated runs as follows: 'Just as, my dear, by one clod of clay all that is made of clay can be made to be known, the different modifications being understood by different names (*nāma-dheyam*) arising out of speech, clay itself being their truth.'

One can notice that the statement simply says that the clay itself is their truth, not that modifications are false or unreal, a sense that Śankara slips into the idea that they arise out of speech. To understand what is here being talked about we can best refer to the BU (2, 1, 20) where it is made clear that, while all things are true as particulars, they also possess one thing in common as their truth. 'As a spider moves along the thread, as small sparks come out of fire, even so from the self come forth all breaths, all words, all divinities, all beings. Its secret meaning is the truth of the truth. Vital breaths are the truth and their truth is I (self).'[14]

A distinction is being made here between two kinds of truth, the ordinary one (*satyam*) and the higher kind (*satyasya satyam,*) not between truth and falsity as Śankara alleges. For him the knowledge of *brahman* is truth while 'knowledge' of manyness is ignorance (*avidyā,*) a term that is conspicuous by its absence in such important Upaniṣads as BU, CU and TU. It occurs only once in IU and also in KaU and ŚU, but it does not refer there to the whole realm of phenomena which is what Śankara means by it, following the Buddhist lead.

In the Upaniṣads the distinction is between higher (*para*) and lower (*apara*) knowledge. Knowing *brahman* simply in its manifestation without any understanding of the underlying unity is lower knowledge. Such knowledge is not illusory and cannot be called *avidyā* in the sense in which Śankara uses this term, although it contains no understanding of the highest truth. The term *avidyā* when used in the Upaniṣads simply means acceptance of the phenomenal world, by itself, (that is without being grounded in *brahman*) as the ultimate reality.

In any event, the Upanisads nowhere say that if something arises out of speech it is unreal, as Śankara asserts. Take the following example: 'With the speech, with that self he brought forth all this whatsoever exists here, the Ṛgveda the Yajur Veda, the Sāma Veda, the metres, the sacrifices, men and cattle' (BU 1, 2, 5). 'Verily, the world is a triad of name, shape and work. As regards names, speech is the source, for from it all names arise…It is their *brahman,* for it sustains all names' (BU 1, 6, 1). 'These three together are one, this self; the self, though one, is this triad. This is the immortal veiled by the real. Breath, verily, is the immortal, name and shape are the real. By them this breath is veiled' (BU 1, 6, 3).[15]

One can see that the veiling of the ultimate truth of non-duality is not by the unreal and illusory existent, but by the real itself, the world of name and shape, because of our inability to read their higher truth. This is put into a totally different idiom by Śankara which makes the world of our ordinary experience, the realm of lower knowledge, hang in the air without any relationship to the ultimate ground of existence.

Śankara finds the idea of many issuing forth from the one unacceptable also for logical reasons. He recognizes that the scriptural passages are of a double character; some indicate that *brahman* is one (devoid of all distinctions) and eternally the same (unchanging), while others suggest distinction and change. But the logical mind of Śankara asserts that *brahman* cannot possess double characteristics and so one set of these statements must be assumed to be attributing limiting adjuncts to *brahman* arising out of nescience or *avidyā*:

The same one and only one *brahman* cannot at one and the same time be understood both to possess the quality of modification and yet be unchangeable, i.e. without that quality of modification also. If the opponent were to suggest "It may well be like something which is both stationary and at the same time have movement", we reply "No", because it has been particularized as being absolutely unchangeable. It is not possible that one and the same unchangeable *brahman* can at one and the same time be the substratum of many opposite qualities such as being fixed and yet capable of movement. We have already said that *brahman* is unchangeable and eternal because of the denial by the scriptures of its undergoing any modification'.[16]

The opponents' idea that one and the same thing is both stationary and moving, put down as illogical by Śankara, in fact comes from IU: 'It, one, unmoving, moves swifter than the mind. The senses do not attain it for its being ever ahead. It stands still but outruns everything that runs. In it the moving air supports all existence' (IU 4). Obviously, Śankara's *brahman* is unequivocally one thing of such simplicity that it cannot be the basis from which opposite qualities issue forth. It also appears to be of a finite, limited nature so that undergoing modifications would mean diminution of its being

The BU, which is based on the double mystical experience of all things both disappearing into and arising out of the one, has no problem of how all things can arise out of *brahman* which nevertheless remains unchanged and unlimited. It sets out the paradoxical character of *brahman* as the inexhaustible reality which gives rise to all things and yet remains ever the same as the full. 'That is full, this is full. From fullness arises fullness. If fullness is taken away from fullness, it is fullness itself that remains' (BU 5, 1, 1). This statement itself is proof, apart from many others quoted earlier, that Śankara's statement about scriptures as denying that *brahman* undergoes modifications is untrue.

Śankara quotes selectively from the scriptures, which is typical of rational activity, to establish his own idea of one reality without a second: 'Now there is the instruction not so, not so (BU 2, 3, 6) and thus it is determined that in this way, by denying the truth of the imagined aspects of *brahman* the real nature of *brahman* is intimated, and this aggregate of all effects which depends upon it is denied to be true by the words, not so, not so. It is logical also that this is a repudiation of all effects as such, by the words, not so, not so, as they are in the ultimate sense non-existent'.[17]

Let me quote a passage to show that it does not mean that the whole phenomenal world has been repudiated as Śankara would have it: 'He who knows it thus attains splendour like a sudden flash of lightning. Now therefore there is the teaching, not this, not this…the designation for him is the truth of truth. Verily, the vital breath is the truth, and he is the truth of that' (BU 2, 3, 6).[18]

I find here no suggestion that the 'this or that' of ordinary experience, with which *brahman*—revealed like a sudden flash of lightning—cannot be equated, is illusory or is repudiated as having imaginary being; particularly because the vital breath (presumably the individual experiencing) is declared to be true.

The world of 'this or that' is the world which is experienced by everybody. Therefore Śankara is not entitled to give it the status of an imagined object comparable to that of 'a flower growing in the sky' or stamp it as non-existent like 'the son of a barren woman'. He, in fact, borrows the Yogācāra Buddhist terminology of *adhyāsa*, meaning the superimposition of the attributes of one thing on another, to explain how the world comes to be there: '…it is on the part of man a natural procedure—which has its cause

in wrong knowledge—not to distinguish the two entities (object and subject) and their respective attributes, although they are absolutely distinct, but to superimpose upon each the characteristic nature and the attributes of the other, and thus, coupling the real and the unreal, to make use of expressions such as "That am I," "That is mine."'[19]

The opponent naturally asks: 'How can there be a superimposition of sense objects on the universal self which itself is not an object (since we do not experience it)?' Śankara answers by arguments which are beside the point. The universal self, he says, is not a total non-object, because it is enacted by the word *asmat*. How this purely verbal point, which has nothing to do with experience, can help superimposition of one thing on another (which must be within the field of experience) I fail to see. I presume that one is hardly likely to indulge in superimposition at the moment of the revelation of truth. As Śankara says himself, for him who sees that his self is *brahman* the whole phenomenal world with its actions, agents and results of actions is non-existent.[20]

Also, as the individual person, who does the superimposition himself, does not exist outside the superimposition, one wonders how the whole process gets going. *Brahman,* the true reality on which the thing is superimposed, naturally does not start it—also because *brahman* is not effected by ignorance which is the reason behind superimposition. The instant logician that Śankara is when it suits his purpose, he refuses to answer the question about the relationship between *brahman* and *māyā* by saying that it is unthinkable.

The world is not an impossible entity like the son of a barren woman. It is not non-existent like something which nobody has ever experienced, for example a flower growing in the sky. But for Śankara it exists only as an illusory imposition through ignorance, as snake exists in the rope through imposition by mistake, i.e. ignorance.

If it were not for Śankara's affirmation of *brahman* as being the ultimate reality and *māyā* as being cosmic in nature rather than individual, one could regard his philosophy as a refurbished version of Yogācāra Buddhist philosophy in which one comes across concepts like *avidyā, māyā, adhyāsa,* and even the snake-rope example in their original version.

But of course, Yogācāra philosophy functions within the conceptual structure of Buddhism with its pressupposition of the flux nature of reality. Upaniṣadic conceptual structure, on the other hand, is very different; in it all things, as they are, are affirmed as expressions of the ultimate. It is changed drastically when Śankara superimposes a reworked version of the Yogācāra philosophy on the Upaniṣads. It then plays havoc with the very positive message of the Upaniṣads which is the participation of all levels of phenomenal existence, in their differences of name and shape and work, in one ultimate reality which is here everywhere and at the same time transcends, in its fullness, the categories of space, time and causality.

NOTES

1 *The Principal Upaniṣads*, ed. with introd., text, translation and notes by S. Radhakrishnan, London 1953, p. 698.
2 Ibid., pp. 192–3, except for the underlined sentence which is my translation.
3 Ibid., p. 667.
4 Ibid., pp. 200–1.
5 Ibid., p. 263.
6 Ibid., p. 232–3.
7 Ibid., pp. 163–4 and pp. 171–2.
8 Ibid., pp. 151–2 and p. 166; the translation of the latter quotation has been modified.
9 Ibid., p. 673, p. 199 and p. 572; the translation of the later quotation has been modified.
10 Ibid., p. 572 and p. 548; the translation of the latter quotation has been modified.
11 Ibid., p. 220. The translation has been somewhat altered by me.
12 Ibid., p. 390.
13 E.Deutsch & J.A.B.van Buitenen (ed.), *A Source Book of Advaita Vedānta,* Honolulu 1971, p. 179.
14 Radhakrishnan, op. cit., p. 190.
15 Ibid., pp. 153 and 183.
16 V.M.Apte (tr.), *Brahma-Sūtra-Shankara-Bhāshya,* Bombay 1960, p. 309.
17 Ibid., p. 600.
18 Radhakrishnan, op. cit. p. 194.
19 Deutsch, op. cit., p. 152.
20 Ibid., p. 179.

5
BIRTH OF EXTRAORDINARY PERSONS: THE BUDDHA'S CASE

Minoru Hara

As pointed out by Windisch, 'religious logic' requires that pious followers of particular religions try to embellish the lives of their founders as much as possible.[1] As a result the stories of their lives become mythified and adorned with many kinds of legendary material and miraculous events. This tendency makes itself felt particularly in the accounts of the two most important events of their lives, namely their birth and death. This is because birth in the human form on earth involves getting stained by some kind of impurity and death is contrary to the infinity or eternity of such deified beings as founders of religions.

The process of mythification, however, varies from religion to religion according to the cultural background.[2] The Buddha's life is no exception to this process of mythification. It is entangled with a number of legendary stories imbued with elements peculiar to Indian culture.

Much has been written on the life of the Buddha by scholars both in the West and the East on the basis of textual materials available in Pāli, Sanskrit, Tibetan and Chinese. These textual studies have also been combined with those in other disciplines such as history, archaeology and art history. As early as 1948 Lamotte surveyed important studies on the subject published by then, critically sorted out the legends and identified five stages in their formation.[3] Being myself a student of Hindu religion and literature, I propose to discuss some points of the Buddha's birth story in the light of the Hindu concept of *janma-duḥkha* which is said by Lamotte to be *la douler qui est la plus grave parmi toutes les doulers*.[4]

To begin with, we shall give a brief survey of the legendary stories of the Buddha's birth as related in the *Acchariyabbhutasutta* (M), the *Mahāpadānasutta* (D), *Nidānakathā, Mahāvastu, Lalitavistara, Buddhacarita* and their Chinese equivalents.[5]

To illuminate the peculiarity of the Buddha's birth we shall next discuss some selected passages from Hindu religious literature which describe the *janma-duḥkha* as it is experienced by ordinary human beings. Finally we shall set these two in contrast and investigate some problems which may have contributed to the formation of legends of the Buddha's birth.

I

After careful scrutinies from the Tuṣita heaven when and where to be incarnated (*pañca-mahā-vilocana*), the Bodhisatta, mindful and conscious (*sata sampajāna*) [6] descended therefrom into the womb of his mother. Four deities accompanied him as his guard with swords in their hands (N), saying: 'Let no one, be he human or non-human or whosoever, do harm to the Bodhisatta or to his mother (*mā…viheṭṭhesīti*—M, D; *upaddava-nivaraṇattham* N). No sickness arose in his mother, she was happy, with unwearied body. She could see, within her body, the Bodhisatta as plainly as one could see a thread passed through a transparent gem (M, D).

When he was born, gods received him first and then human beings. Prior to his touching the ground (M, N) four deities received him. According to N four pure-minded (*suddha-citta*) deities brought a golden net upon which they received the Bodhisatta. He came forth stainless (*visada*) from the womb of his mother, undefiled (*amakkhita*) by liquid (*udda,*) mucus (*semha*) or blood (*ruhira*). Completely immune from uncleanness, the Bodhisatta and his mother are compared to a gem laid down on Benares muslin, the one does not stain the other, but both embellish the other by their purity. Nevertheless, two streams of water fell from the sky, one cold and one hot, for the deities to do the necessary bathing of the Bodhisatta and his mother. According to N four kings received the Bodhisatta from the hands of the four deities who had received him in the golden net on a cloth of antelope skin soft to the touch. A large, white parasol was held over him and a pair of chowries (*cāmara*) were fanned to avert insects from him.[7] The Bodhisatta then surveyed all the quarters and in a lordly voice proclaimed: 'I am the chief in the world, I am the eldest and I am the foremost. This is my last birth. There is now no rebirth (*punabbhava*).

Admitting some minor differences in details, such are the main lines of the Buddha's birth story as preserved both in Pāli and Sanskrit texts. However, in addition to them the Sanskrit tradition introduces a new specific element unknown to the Pāli materials, namely that the Bodhisatta was born out of the right side (*dakṣiṇa* pārśva) of his mother, instead of passing through her yoni; and this element of *ayonija* has been transmitted into the Chinese translations and equivalents.[8]

II

From these miraculous birth stories of the Buddha, the *Wunderkind*, let us turn to the descriptions of birth stories of ordinary human beings as given in Hindu literature. In addition to general physiological and embryological descriptions in medieval Hindu medical treatises,[9] We have a number of Hindu religious texts which tell us of the process of human birth in the light of the theory of transmigration, especially in connection with *janma-duḥkha*.[10]

Let us start with the description of ***janma-duḥkha*** as given in Kauṇḍiya's ***Pañcārthabhāṣya***, a commentary on *Pāśupatasūtra*. After giving the well-known threefold (*ādhyātmika, ādhibhautika* and *adhidaivika*) definition of suffering (*duḥkha*,) Kauṇḍiya proceeds to introduce another classification of it which is of five kinds, being composed of *garbha, janman, ajñāna, jarā* and *maraṇa*. Below we shall give a translation of the passages which describe the *garbha*—and ***janma-duḥkha*** with that of the first part of *ajñāna-duḥkha*.[11]

First, suffering in the womb is as follows: when an individual soul (*puruṣa*) is placed in his mother's womb (*udara*,) like a man whose limbs are crammed into a broken cart, he (*puṁs*) necessarily experiences the annoyances of confinement; he has no room, not sufficient space to bend, stretch out etc.,[12] but is obstructed in all his motions like a prisoner stupefied in a dark and doorless chamber. Why? Because he has consciousness (*cetanatvāt*) and the power of experiencing (***bhoktṛtvāt***) and because he identifies himself with those properties (*tan mayatvāt*). The body and the sense-organs (*kārya karaṇa*) , on the other hand, do not [suffer]. Why? Because they lack consciousness (*acetanatvāt*) and the power of experiencing and because they do not identify themselves with those properties.

Also there is suffering at birth (***janma-duḥkha***). When a child is born, his face is immersed in a mud of faeces, he is splashed with showers of urine, he is tormented by having all the apertures of his body squeezed shut by the tightness of the passage through the vagina; and crushed in his bones, soft spots and joints, he is born wailing and screaming. Then, as he is touched by the unaccustomed outer air which meets him at birth[13] his sharp pain is obvious. It is this [suffering at birth] that brings about the loss of latent impression (*saṁskāra-lopa*) which is the cause of memory of his previous births (*jāty- antarādi-smṛti*). It is the individual soul himself who experiences this suffering at birth. Why? Because he has consciousness and the power of experiencing and because he identifies himself with those properties.

Also, there is the suffering of ignorance (*ajñāna-duḥkha*). With his body completely given over to egoism (*ahaṅkāra*), he does not know who he is, whence he has come, to whom he belongs, by what form of bondage he has been bound,[14] what he should do, what he should not do,[15] what he should eat. what he should not eat, what he should drink, what he should not drink. what is truth (*satya*,) what is falsehood (*asatva*,) what is knowledge (*jñāna*,) what is ignorance (*ajñāna*). It is the individual soul himself who experiences the suffering of ignorance…

A reader who is well versed in the Purāṇic texts will be struck by the similarities of this classification of *duḥkha* by Kauṇḍinya to those found in the VP 6, 5, 1ff. and the BrahP 233, 1ff.[16] Despite differences which exist between Kauṇḍinya's version and that of the Purāṇas, whose accounts are very

much abridged and composed in verses and whose classification is sixfold, with the addition of hell (*naraka*) suffering, the similarity between them is remarkable. They share also the threefold definition of suffering mentioned above. Here is the Purāṇic version:

An individual soul (*jantu*,) possessing a subtle body (*sukumāra tanu*,) resides in his mother's womb which is imbued with various sorts of impurity. He stays there being folded in the membrane surrounding the foetus (*ulba*) and distorted all around his back, neck and bones. He experiences severe pains, while being tormented immensely by the foods his mother takes which are to him extremely acid, bitter, pungent, hot and saline.[17] Incapable of extending or contracting his own limbs and reposing amidst a mud of faeces and urine, he is in every way incommoded. He is unable to breathe. Yet, being endowed with consciousness (*sacaitanya*) and thus calling to memory many hundreds of [previous] births, he resides in his mother's womb with great pains, being bound by his previous deeds.

When he is about to be born, his face is turbid with faeces, blood, urine and semen. His bones and muscles are hurt by the *prājāpatya* wind. He is turned head downwards and is finally expelled in a state of extreme exhaustion from his mother's womb by the vehement wind which causes a final delivery. No sooner is he born than he swoons in contact with the external air and then is deprived of knowledge (*vijňāna*). He is tormented as if his limbs are all pierced with thorns or cut into pieces by a saw.[18] He is like a worm which falls down upon the ground from a foul-smelling sore. He is not in a position to scratch, nor even to turn himself, but is completely left to the will of others for his bathing and nourishment. Laid down upon a dirty bed, he is bitten by insects and gadflies and yet has no power to drive them away.

[Thus] there are many sorts of suffering attending birth and immediately succeeding to birth that one meets at his state of being a child (or stupefied, *bāla-bhāva*). These derive from outside world and so forth, Enveloped by the gloom of ignorance (*ajňāna*) and with his inner organs bewildered, he does not know whence he has come, who he is, whither to go, and what is his nature (*kimātmaka*,) by what form of bondage he has been bound, what is the cause, what is the non-cause, what he should do, what he should not do, what he should say, what he should not say.

These two passages of the *Pañcārthabhāṣya* and the VP, which are unfortunately still undatable, but similar in the process of their presentation, illustrate the following points: it is the *janma-duḥkha*, the severe pains one experiences at the time of his birth, that is responsible for the loss of memory (*smṛti*) and knowledge (vijňāna) which the ordinary human being in the state of embryo is supposed to possess until the last moment of his stay in his mother's womb; this *janma-duḥkha* is caused in the conscious embryo by his co-residence with the turbid elements, by the tightness of passage through the vagina,[19] and by the inevitable encounter with the

vehement winds of various sorts both inside and outside of his mother's womb. Becuase of this suffering at birth the ordinary human being becomes *bāla*, meaning both 'stupefied' and 'child'. This is also the starting point of further suffering caused by ignorance.

However, what is the embryo doing while still in his mother's womb with knowledge and full memory of previous births? This can be illustrated by a passage from the GU[20] which describes the physiological development of the embryo from the time of conception (*kalaha, arbuda* etc.) and which finds its parallel in the second *Paraśiṣṭa* of the *Nirukta :*[21]

Now, in the ninth month [from the conception] he comes to possess in entirety the distinctive marks (*lakṣaṇa*) and knowledge (jňāna). He calls to memory his previous births and recognizes his *karman*, virtuous as well as sinful. [Then, he laments.]

'Seeing through thousands of wombs, [I have dwelt in the past, now I remember that] I ate many sorts of food and sucked various breasts. I repeated birth and death again and again. I am now tormented alone by the *karman*, virtuous and sinful, which I have done for the sake of my attendants. They have gone away, partaking of the fruits (of their own *karman*). Alas, I sink into the ocean of suffering and find no remedy. If I am released from this womb, I shall resort to Maheśvara who destroys sins and grants emancipation (*mukti*) as a result. If I am released from this womb, I shall resort to Nārāyaṇa who destroys sins and grants emancipation as a result. If I am released from this womb, I shall study Sāṅkhya and Yoga which destroys sins and grants emancipation as a result. If I am released from this womb, I shall meditate upon the eternal *brahman*.'

But when he reaches the orifice of the womb (*yoni-dvara*,) he is afflicted by restraint (*yantra*) and expelled forcibly[22] from the womb with great difficulty. No sooner is he born than he is touched by the *vaiṣṇava* wind and he neither remembers the number of births and deaths [he has experienced in the past] nor recognizes his *karman*, virtuous or sinful.

This passage tells us how the embryo recalls his previous births and is so disgusted with the pains of transmigration that he makes up his mind never to repeat the same in future. He is intelligent enough to think of philosophical teachings and pious enough to resort to a particular god. But all this is reduced to naught because of the suffering at birth which makes him a stupefied child. However, the recollection of previous births, disgust with transmigration and determination to obtain final release on the part of the embryo are recurring motifs in the Purāṇic literature. Two excerpted examples are given here, one from the Pretakalpa of GP 6, 9ff., which is almost parallel to BP 3, 31, 5ff., and the other from MP 32, 63ff. paralleled by Uttarakhanda of GP 32, 63ff.[23]

'With his head placed in his belly and his back and neck curved in his mother's womb, he lies unable to move his limbs like a bird in a cage. Due to the divine ordinanfce (*daivāt*,) memory comes back to him. While calling

to mind the deeds produced during hundreds of [previous] births, he sighs deeply [thinking] where to find refuge (12–13).
Then the soul, which is called jantu, *jīva* and also *ṛṣi*,[24] implores the god Viṣṇu with his hands clasped and faltering voice (14).

I seek refuge in Viṣṇu, the husband of Śri, the supporter of the world and the destroyer of sins, who is compassionate to those who resort to him. Bewildered by your māyā I came to the cycle of transmigration (*saṁsṛṣti*) due to my self-conceit (*abhimāna*) with regard to my body, son and wife (16–17)…If I am released from the womb, I'll remember thy feet. I shall take means (*upāya*) by which I may obtain the final emancipation (*mukti*). Fallen into a well of faeces and urine I am burnt by the fire of the belly. I wish to get out of it, but when can I get out? I seek refuge in him alone who has given me this knowledge (*vijňāna*) and is compassionate to the afflicted. Let not this transmigration occur to me again (19–21).

Despite this solemn determination (*kṛta-mati*) with pious devotion to the god, the wind of delivery pushes him head downward to birth. He experiences intolerable pain when he issues forcibly out of his mother's womb. He can hardly breathe and then loses memory (*hata-smṛti*).

Fallen upon the ground, he moves like a worm on excrement. Deprived of knowledge (*jňāna*) he cries repeatedly, being led to the course opposite [to his determination]. If one could keep holding his determination (*mati*) with regard to his previous birth, illness and death, and if the determination remained firm enough, who would not be liberated from the bondage [of transmigration] (26–7).

No sooner has he come out of his mother's womb than Viṣṇu's māyā assaults him and by this everything becomes out of control of his own independent will. He is nourished by people who do not understand his wishes and is unable to refuse what is done by them against his will (28–30). Laid upon a dirty bed which is befouled by perspiration, he is neither able to scratch his own limbs, nor to sit, rise and move. Mosquitos, gadflies, bugs and others bite the soft-skinned one who is crying and deprived of knowledge (*jňāna*,) just as insects bite a little worm (31–2).[25]

The second example from MP II, 13–20 follows in full:

Numerous stages of his transmigration (*saṁsāra-bhūmi*) occur to his memory, hence afflicted by this or that he becomes disgusted. He thinks: 'Never again shall I thus act, when once I am delivered from this womb. Assuredly, I shall so strive that I do not again undergo conception'. Thus he meditates, recollecting the hundreds of pains attending birth which he himself experienced aforetime and those [pains] which also derived from fate (*daiva*) and the outer world (*bhūta*). Then, in the course of time, he (*jantu*) is turned head downwards when he is born in the ninth or tenth month. While he is being expelled, he is pained by the *prājāpatya* wind. He then issues out wailing, because he is afflicted by pains in his heart. Once expelled out of the womb, he falls into an intolerable swoon. But he gains

consciousness (*cetanā*) again when he comes into contact with [outer] air. Then Viṣṇu's *māyā* which effaces [consciousness] assails him. Then his *ātman* is bewildered by it and he loses his knowledge (*jňāna*). Bereft of knowledge he (*jantu*) partakes then of the state of being a *bāla* (stupefied child).

The sublime thought (*mati*) on the part of the embryo to put an end to transmigration[26] may or may not be accompanied by an appeal to particular deities. The decisive factors which cause the fatal loss of memory and knowledge vary from text to text: the tightness of the vaginal passage in K, contact with the outer air in K and VP, *vaiṣṇava vāyu* in GU, parturition wind in GP and *vaiṣṇavi māyā* in MP.[27]

Despite minor differences these passages of Hindu religious literature agree with each other in making *janma-duḥkha* responsible for the loss of intelligence. They contrast the prenatal mental situation with the postnatal one, while attributing to the former the blissful state of being fully furnished with insight and to the latter its loss with misery of all sorts. The *janma-duḥkha* intervenes between the two. Two Buddhist treatises have come to my notice which describe it in a comparable manner, namely Vism and Akb, but neither of them attributes the complete loss of insight to the *janma-duḥkha*. However, it is met occasionally in some texts of the Chinese Tripiṭaka .[28]

III

From the descriptions of suffering which the ordinary human beings meet at the time of birth, let us come back to the Buddha's birth stories and compare the two.

First, ordinary human beings are said to pass through five stages of embryonic development, *kalala*, *arbuda*, *peśī*, *ghana* and *praśākha*[29] and it is toward the end of the prenatal period that the embryo is endowed with consciousness (*caitanya*) and knowledge (*jňāna*).[30] *The* Buddha, on the other hand, is said to possess consciousness and knowledge from the very beginning.[31] He made the five investigations from the Tuṣita heaven, entered into Māyā's womb, stayed there and issued therefrom, all while being conscious and mindful (*sata sampajāna*).

Second, the ordinary embryo experiences pain while he resides in his mother's womb. He is confined in a dark, doorless chamber of the womb which is often compared to hell.[32] Not only is he tormented by his mother's actions, but he torments her.[33] The Buddha, however, stayed in his mother's womb comfortably without giving her any pain.[34]

Third, the ordinary embryo is infested with all sorts of impurity (*mala*) both in his prenatal state and at the time of delivery. The baby newly born out of his mother's womb[35] is often compared to a worm falling from a foul-smelling sore. The Buddha is immune from impurity (*amrakṣita*) . He

and his mother's womb are compared to a gem placed on Benares muslin; both are pure and embellish each other.[36]

Fourth, when an ordinary human being is born he falls on the ground like a worm from a sore on excrements. Bereft of free will he is left in complete dependence on others for bathing and nourishment. But the Buddha was received by the *devaputras* before he reached the ground and was bathed with two jet-streams descended from the sky.[37]

Fifth, an ordinary baby is laid on a dirty bed and is unable to turn around. Insects bite him, but he cannot scratch and drive them away. The Buddha was laid on a beautiful bed with canopies guarded by four deities with Brahma holding an umbrella over him and *nāgas* fanning him with their chowries to protect him from the insects.[38]

The succeeding events of the Buddha's seven steps and his famous proclamation are by themselves miraculous enough to require no further comment.[39] They are, of course, contrasted by Purāṇic accounts about newly-born infants' inability to move, walk and speak anything other than inarticulate loud cries.[40]

However, above all these distinctive features which embellish the Buddha's birth, a point of far greater importance seems to rest in the fact that he is *ayonija*[41], that is, he was born not by passing through the tightness of his mother's yoni, but issued out of her right side (*dakṣina pārśva*). Human beings endowed with extraordinary qualities are supposed to have an extraordinary origin and even a particular mode of coming into existence similar to extraordinary birth of gods and sages abounding in Sanskrit literature.[42] Indra himself is said to have been born from his mother's right side, Aurva from the thigh, Pṛthu from the hand, Māndhātṛ from the head and Kakṣīvat from the armpit.[43] But, besides this intention on the part of Buddhist authors of legends to raise their founder to the rank and dignity of ancient gods and sages, we have an impression that this birth story may well have been designed to release the Buddha from the suffering at birth. If the Buddha is *ayonija*, he is free from *janma-duḥkha* which normally brings about stupefaction. He is therefore privileged to preserve the memory of his previous births (*smṛti*)[44] and the sublime thoughts (*mati, jňāna*) which the embryo holds in his prenatal state.[45] As we have seen above, the embryo recalls the suffering of transmigration, and being disgusted with it (*nirveda,*) he determines not to repeat the same in future. This determination, blotted out by *janma-duḥkha* in ordinary babies is retained by the infant Buddha thanks to his being *ayonija* so that he can proclaim after his birth: 'In all the world I am the chief, best and foremost. This is my last birth, and I shall never be born again.' The last portion of this proclamation gives us an impression as if it were an outgrowth of the determination made by the embryo as seen in the previous chapter.

These points of contrast given above may illustrate some peculiarities of devices used by the Buddhist authors of the Buddha's birth story for the

mythification of their founder. This process of mythification is strongly tinged with the general cultural background of India as revealed in Hindu religious literature. One perceives that these devices are in evidence particularly in the Buddhist Sanskrit texts: *Mahavāstu, Lalitavistara, Buddhacarita* and their Chinese equivalents. It is obvious that mythification is much stronger here than in Pāli. If it is true that the story of the Buddha's birth out of his mother's right side is peculiar to the Sanskrit tradition and unknown to the Pāli literature,[46] it may mean that Pāli Buddhists had no need to save the Buddha from the ***janma-duḥkha*** which is so prominent a feature among Hindus. This could be a theme for future research by a competent Buddhist scholar.

NOTES

1 E.Windisch, *Buddha's Geburt und die Lehre von der Seelenwanderung,* Leipzig 1908, pp. 172 & 197.
2 Ibid., p. 222.
3 É.Lamotte, 'La Légende du Buddha', *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 134 (1948), pp. 37–73. Cf. also *Histoire du Bouddhisme Indien,* Louvain 1958, pp. 718ff.
4 É.Lamotte, *Le traité de la grande vertu de sagesse,* tome II. Louvain 1949, repr. 1967, p. 890.
5 The following sources have been used:
The Majjhima Nikāya, ed. R.Chalmers, London 1889, vol. 2, pp. 119–23. Its Chinese counterpart is found in *Taisho* I, pp. 469–71.
The Dīgha Nikāya, ed. T.W.Rhys Davids & J.E.Carpenter. London 1903, vol. 2, pp. 12–15. Here the story is related in connection with the Bodhisatta Vipassin. The corresponsing Sanskrit text has been edited by E.Waldschmidt, *Das Mahāvadānasūtra,* Abhandlungen der Deutschen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin 1953, pp. 18–20. Its Chinese equivalent is in *Taisho* I, pp. 1ff.
The Jātaka, ed. V.Fausboll, London 1877, vol. I, pp. 51–3.
Le Mahāvastu, ed. E. Senart, Paris 1882 & 1890, vol. I, pp. 193–229 (Dīpaṅkara) , and vol. II, pp. 1–45.
Lalita Vistara, ed. S.Lefmann, Halle 1902, pp. 76–93.
The Buddhacarita, ed. E.H.Johnston, Calcutta 1935, pp. 1–3.
Comparative and analytical studies have been made by A.Bareau, 'La légende de la jeunesse du Buddha dans les Vinayapiṭaka anciens', *Oriens Extremus* 9, Wiesbaden 1962, pp. 6–33; and 'La jeunesse du Buddha dans les Sûtrapiṭaka et les Vinayapiṭaka anciens', BEFEO 61, Paris 1974, pp. 199–274.
6 For this phrase cf. R.O.Franke, 'Der Buddha als ernst bedacht und vollbewusst', *Festgabe H.Jacobi,* Bonn 1926, pp. 329–30; H.Lüders, *Beobachtungen über die Sprache des buddhistischen Urkanons,*

Berlin 1954, pp. 157–8. As regards its Sanskrit usage in the Buddhist texts, see F.Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary,* New Haven 1953, p. 577.

7 *Cāmara* in this context is unknown to M and D. In N, however, a white parasol is held by the Mahābrahma, also in the Sanskrit tradition, cf. Mhvs I, 220, II & II, 22, 122; L 84, 3 & 84, 17–18. Cf. Windisch, op. cit., pp. 130–6.

8 Cf. E.J.Thomas, *The Life of Buddha as Legend and History,* London 1927, p. 34. Cf. also B I, 11 (*yoni-ajāta*). For Chinese versions see *Taisho* I, 4b, 153c–154a; III, 463c, 473c, 494a, 553a, 618a, 627a, 686–7; IV, 1a, 58c. In the corresponding Chinese version of the Pāli *Acchariyab- bhutasutta* (M) the Bodhisatta is said to have stayed in the right side of his mother, but not issued out from there (*Taisho* I, 470a). However, it is generally believed that the male embryo resides in the mother's right side and the female one in the left. Cf. J.Jolly, *Medizin,* Strassburg 1901, p. 55.

9 Cf. e.g. Jolly, op. cit., pp. 53–5, Windisch, op. cit., pp. 86ff. and Reinhold F.G.Müller, 'Altindische Embryologie', *Nova Acta Leopol dina,* Neue Folge 17, Leipzig 1955, pp. 5–52.

10 For Vedic references cf. P.Rolland, 'Un fragment médical védique; Le premier khaṇḍa du Vārāhapariśiṣṭa bhūtotpati', *Münchener Studien zur Sprachwissenschaft* 30 (1972), pp. 129–38. For Jaina embryology cf. C.Caillat, 'Sur les doctrines médicales dans le Tandulaveyāliya', *Indologica Taurinensia* 2 (1975), pp. 45–55. For further references to *janma-duḥkha* in Chinese and Japanese literature cf. my Japanese article 'Shoku', *Festschrift K.Tamaki,* Tokyo 1977, pp. 667ff.

11 *Pāśupatasūtra with Panchārthabhāshya of Kauṇḍiya*, ed. R.A.Sastri, TSS 143 (1940), p 141, lines 16ff. For the threefold division of suffering see the *Sāṅkhya-kārikā* I. For further references cf. M.Hara, *Indo-Iranian Journal* 16 (1974), pp. 59–60.

12 For this *ākuñcana-prasāraṇa* etc. cf. *Vaiśeṣika sūtra* 1, 1, 7 (*utkṣepanam avakṣepaṇam ākuñcanam prasāranaṁ gamanam iti karmāṇi*).

13 The phrase here *tasyanucitena bāhyena* vāyunā jananāvartena *spṛṣṭasya*…may be rendered as 'he was touched by the unaccustomed outer air and whirlwind (*āvarta*) which causes one's birth'.

14 Or it may simply mean 'who is my relative'?

15 We read *kiṁ kāryaṁ kim akāryam for kiṁ kāraṇaṁ* kim *akāraṇam* in conformity with the following *bhakṣyam abhakṣyam* and *peyam apeyam,* although we have *kāraṇam* kim *akāraṇaṁ* in a similar context of the VP 6, 5, 22.

16 *Viṣṇupurāṇa* , The Shri Venkateshwar Press, Bombay 1910, pp. 276–7; *Brahmapurāṇa*, ASS 28 (1895), pp. 561–2.

17 For these influences of the mother's food and drink over the embryo see E.Abegg, *Der Pretakalpa des Garuḍa-purāṇa , eine Darstellung*

des hinduistischen Totenkultes und Jenseitsglaubens, Berlin und Leipzig 1921, p. 93, note 6 (VI, 11); *Visuddhimagga,* London 1921, p. 500, lines 17–20; *Nandapaṇḍita ad* Viṣṇusmṛti 96, 32 (The Adyar Library Series 93, p. 864); MhB 13, 117, 28; and *Taisho* 14, p. 796a, 17, p. 412c, etc.

18 The similes of thornes and saw are also met in Sureśvara's *Taittirīyopani- ṣad-bhāṣya-vārtika* 2, 193 (ASS 13, p. 82), tr. by J.M.van Boetzelaer, Leiden 1971.

19 This *yoni-nissaraṇa-saṅkata* is the same as *yoni-saṅkata-nirgamana* in the Vs 96, 133, and possibly as *yoni-yantra* (restraint in the *yoni*) which is found in the AP (ASS 41) 369, 27 (*yoni-yantratah pidyamana*), PP 2, 66, 95 (*yoni-yantra-prapidana*) and BrP 30 (*yoni-yantra-pidita,* BI text 1891, p. 376, line 7). According to PP 2, 8, 12–13 the *yoni* expands to 24 *aṅgula* at the time of birth, whereas the embryo expands to 25, hence its pain (cf. also Nandapaṇḍita and Vs Adyar Library series 93, p. 865). On the general meaning of *yoni* cf. L.Renou, 'L'acception premiere du mot sanskrit yoni (chemin)', *Bulletin de la société de linguistique de Paris* 41 (1941), pp. 18–24. For *yantra* itself cf. GU 4 (BI text, p. 14, line 6 *yantreṇāpīdyamāna*), Ysm 3, 83 (*niḥsāryate bāṇa iva yantra-chidreṇa sajvaraḥ*), and Su 2, 197 (*asthi-yantra-viniṣpiṣṭa*) and 198 (*yantrād iva vinirmukta,* ASS 13, p. 82).

20 *The Atharvana Upanishads,* BI 249, Calcutta 1872, pp. 13–14. For studies on this Upaniṣad see A.Weber, *Indische Studien* 2, Berlin 1853, pp. 65–71; R.Schmidt, *Beiträge zur indischen Erotik,* Berlin 1922, p. 396; and E.Windisch, op. cit., p. 87.

21 R.Roth, *Yāska Nirukta mit den Nighaṇṭavas* Darmstadt repr. 1976, pp. 190–1. This portion of *Nirukta* is quoted by *Mitākṣarā* ad Ysm 3, 83.

22 *yantreṇāpīdyamāno ;* here yantra may be equivalent to yoni-yantra or simply an adverb *yantreṇa*, 'forcibly'.

23 *The Garuḍa Purāṇa* (Sāroddhāra), with English translation, Sacred Books of the Hindus, vol. 9, Allahabad 1911, pp. 46–51.

Le Bhāgavatapurāṇa, ou histoire poétique de Krishna, traduit et publie par E.Bournouf, tome I, Paris, 1840, pp. 273–5. The *Mārkaṇḍeyapur- āṇa* ed. K.M.Banerjea. BI 28 (1862), pp. 82–4.

The Garuḍapurāṇa , The Shri Venkateshwar Press, Bombay 1906, p. 199. Cf. also W.Kirfel, 'Ein medizinisches Kapitel des Garuḍapurāṇa ', *Asiatica* (Festschrift F. Weller). Leipzig 1954, pp. 342–3.

24 The individual soul is called by a large variety of names: *ātman* in PP 2, 7, 34 & 42; 2, 8, 3, & 8 etc.; *puruṣa* in PsS; jīva in PP 2, 66, 39 & 43 etc.; *jantu* in VP 6, 5, 10, MP 11, 9 etc.; *dehin* in NP 1, 32, 12 & 21 etc.; *ṛṣi* in BP 3, 31, 11 & 22 etc.; *nara* in MhB 14, 18, 4 etc. Cf. also Windisch, op. cit., pp. 12ff. (*sattva, gandharva, devaputra, vijňāna, nāmarūpa*) and pp. 84ff. (*buddhi, kṣetrajña*).

25 I owe a critical translation and copious notes to the work of E.Abegg, op. cit., pp. 91–9. Cf. also J.J.Meyer, *Sexual Life in Ancient India* (Indian ed. 1971), pp. 366–9.
26 For other occurrences of this sublime thought cf. Abegg, op. cit., p. 95, note 2; AP 369, 26 (ASS 41); PP 2, 8, 10; and Su 2, 189–96 (ASS 13).
27 In the Buddhist texts the wind which causes one's birth is said to be brought about by *karman.* Cf. N, p. 52, line 25; Vism, p. 500, line 27 (*kammajavāta;*) and *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, ed. P.Pradhan, Patna 1967, p. 130, lines 7–8 (*karma-vipākaja-vāyu*). The idea of this wind is preserved further in the Chinese and Japanese Buddhist literature. The concept of *karmādi-marut* is also met in Su 2, 181.
28 Cf. Taisho 13, 169b; 32, 726b; 15, 188a; 234c; and 17, 412c-413a. As for the references in the Jaina texts, cf. Ta 25 (*tena dukkhena sammūḍho jāiṁ sarai n'appano,*) text ed. W.Schubring, Wiesbaden 1969.
29 For these terms cf. L.de la Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu*, Louvain 1926, p. 58; É.Lamotte, *Le traité…*, p. 270 & *La somme du grand véhicule d'Asaṅga*, Louvain 1974, p. 54 & p. *13*; Caillat, op. cit., p. 51 (Ta 17); Windisch, op. cit., pp. 87–9; Abegg, op. cit., p. 92 (P 6, 6–7); van Boetzelaer, op. cit., p. 84 (Su 2, 170- 1); R.A. Stein, 'Le Liṅgades danses masquées lamaïques et la théorie des âmes', *Liebenthal Festschrift* (Sino-Indian Studies 5), Śāntiniketan 1957, p. 214; S.Tsuda, *The Saṁvarodayatantra*, Tokyo 1974, p. 75. For Chinese texts see *Taisho* 17, 412c; 30, 283a & 284c & 285a etc.
30 The time of entering of consciousness into the embryo fluctuates from the seventh to the ninth month in the Purāṇic texts. Cf. Abegg, op. cit., p. 94, note 7.
31 Cf. Akb 3, 16 and Poussin, op. cit., p. 54.
32 Cf. Abegg, op. cit., p. 93, note 6; MaiU 3, 4; Vsm p.501, line 25 (*gūtha-narake viya mātu-gabbhe*)*;* Akb 3, 15; Ta 27 (*naraya-saṅkāsa*). In Su 2,194 & 196 one's mother's womb is said to be worse than hell.
33 Cf. e.g. BrP p. 376, lines 4–6 (*mātuś cāpi duḥkhaṁ kurvan…*)
34 Cf. Windisch, op. cit., pp. 116–17.
35 A description of the impurity of the womb is a recurring motif in Sanskrit literature. O.Böthlingk, *Indische Sprüche,* St. Petersburg 1870–73, nos. 223:2259, 3411, 4777, 7186; MhB 11,4,4; 12,206,6; 13,117,28; Akb p. 130, lines 12ff. (Poussin p. 59); Vism p. 500, lines 5–8; Ta 27–30; Su 2,194.
36 Cf. Windisch, op. cit., pp. 127–9.
37 Ibid., pp. 126 & 129–30.

38 Cf. B 1,17 & N p. 53, lines 16–17; Mhvs, 1, 220, 11–12 & II, 22, 12–13.
39 Cf. Windisch, op. cit., pp. 130–35.
40 Cf. Pr 6, 31; 6, 29; 6, 26; 6, 32; MP 11, 17; K (TSS 143) p. 142, line 3; Su (ASS 13) 2, 198.
41 For *ayonija* in general, cf. Windisch, op. cit., pp. 184–6. As regards Sītā's birth, we have now an article by C.Bulke, 'La naissance de Sītā'. BEFEO 46 (1952), pp. 107–17.
42 Cf. Hara, 'Indra and Tapas', *The Adyar Library Bulletin* 39 (1975), p. 157; E.Senart, *Essai sur la légende Buddha*, Paris 1882, p. 249; A. Foucher, *La vie du Buddha*, Paris 1949, p. 43; A.Bareau, BEFEO 61, p. 206.
43 Cf. B 1,10 and E.H.Johnston, note *ad loc*. Also *Taisho* 24, p. 100c–101a; and R. Gnoli, *The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saṅghabheda-vastu*, Rome 1977, pp. 16ff. I owe this reference to the late Prof. J. Brough.
44 Johnston translated B 1, 11 *saṁprajāno suṣuve* na *mūḍhah* as 'he was born not ignorant but fully conscious' and rightly commented: 'probably it means "remembering his previous births" in this connection'. Windisch also often translated *smṛta* (Pāli sata) as 'mit der Erinnerung [*an sein früheres Dasein*]…', op. cit., p. 35, p. 88 etc.
45 For prenatal experiences in general cf. F.B.J.Kuiper, 'Cosmogony and Conception. A Query', *History of Religions* 10 (1970), pp. 91–138, esp. pp. 115ff. The first reference in Sanskrit literature to prenatal experience and memory of previous births is found in RV 4, 27, 1 and AU 4,6. For studies on this story cf. also U. Schneider, 'Die Komposition der Aitareya-Upaniṣad', *Indo-Iranian Journal* 7, pp. 58–9; *Der Somaraub des Manu*, Wiesbaden 1971, pp. 10ff. Also: Windisch, op. cit., pp. 62 & 91.
46 In N p. 50,. lines 21–3 we read only that the Bodhisatta entered his mother's womb through her right side, but there is no mention of his birth therefrom. Cf. also Thomas, op. cit., p. 34 and our note 8 above.

6
CONSCIOUSNESS MYSTICISM IN THE DISCOURSES OF THE BUDDHA

Peter Harvey

In this paper I seek to investigate central descriptions of mystical experience in the *suttas* of the Pāli Canon. This literature clearly concerns itself with forms of mystical experience and the path which leads to them. Though mysticism can also exist in a doctrinal form, not much is said on this matter. The Pāli *suttas* represent, in general, an early phase in the development of Buddhism and only contain hints at what doctrines might best fit their descriptions of the higher forms of mystical experience, especially those pertaining to *nibbāna.*

In the Theravāda school mystical doctrine on the nature of *nibbāna* is still minimal, but there is a tendency to stress the complete otherness of *nibbāna* from ***saṁsāra***.[1] There are good grounds for doing this in the Pāli *suttas,* but there is in them also material suggestive of a Vijňānavāda-type interpretation (*nibbāna* as a radical re-ordering of consciousness), and other material suggestive of Śūnyavāda-type interpretation (linking *nibbāna* to the seeing through of empty phenomena). It is on this material that I shall focus. In showing thus the common experiential ground of different doctrinal formulations in Buddhism, this paper will provide a case-study of how one group of mystical experiences can contain the seeds of a range of mystical doctrines which emphasize one or other aspect of these experiences.

NIBBĀNA

The classic 'description' of *nibbāna,* apparently as a metaphysical state, is at Ud 80:

There exists, monks, that sphere (*āyatana*) where there is neither solidity, nor cohesion, nor heat, nor motion, nor the sphere of infinite space, nor the sphere of infinite consciousness, nor the sphere of nothingness, nor the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception; neither this world, nor a world beyond, nor both, nor sun and moon; there, monks, I say, there is no coming (*āgati*) and going (*gati,*) no maintenance (*thiti,*) no decease (*cuti*) and rebirth (*upapatti*); that, surely, is without support, it has no functioning,

it has no object (*appatiṭṭhaṁ appavattaṁ anārammaṇaṁ*)—this is just the end of *dukkha*.[2]

This example of negatively couched mysticism certainly seems to present *nibbāna* as a non-comprehendable, radically transcendent metaphysical state. I would like to suggest, however, that when this passage is compared with other accounts of the goal in the Pāli *suttas*, it starts to become more amenable to analysis, and to bear a meaning which is consonant with a Vijňānavāda-type interpretation of *nibbāna* as a kind of *viňňāna*, consciousness, or Mādhyamika-type interpretation which links the experience of *nibbāna* to the seeing through of *saṁsāra* as empty.

NIBBĀNA AS A STATE OF *VIŇŇĀNA*

Terms used in the second half of the description of *nibbāna* in Ud 80 also occur in a passage at S III.53–4 (cf. also S II.66–7):

As an approach to material shape, a persisting consciousness would persist (*tiṭṭeyya*) ; with material shape as object (*ārammaṇa*), with material shape as support (*patiṭṭha*), seeking means of enjoyment, it would come to growth, increase and abundance. [Similarly with]…feeling…perception…mental activities.

Were one to say this, monks: 'Apart from material shape, feeling, perception and mental activities, I will show forth the coming or going, or the decease and rebirth, or the growth, increase and abundance of consciousness'—that is not possible.

If attachment (*rāga*) for the element (*dhātu*) of material shape, monks, is abandoned by a monk, by that abandonment of attachments [its] object is cut off, and there is no support for consciousness. Similarly, it has no support if a monk abandons attachment for the elements of feeling, perception, mental activities or consciousness.

That unsupported (*apatiṭṭhita*) consciousness has no increase and is without karma formations (*anabhisaṅkharañca*), released (vimutta); by [its] release it is steadfast (*ṭhita* ;) by its steadfastness it is content; by [its] contentment it is not disturbed; not being disturbed it just by itself attains *nibbāna (parinibbāyati*). It/he comprehends: 'Destroyed is birth…'

The underlined words indicate the parallels with Ud 80. The passage refers to two states of consciousness: (1) Normal consciousness which 'persists' with one of the first four *khandhas*[3] as 'object' and 'support'. Due to this there is a 'coming and going' and 'decease and rebirth'; these processes are seen as being processes of consciousness itself. (2) A state of consciousness which exists in a person when there is no attachment for any of the five *khandha-elements* (including ordinary consciousness); as such it is without object, unsupported, without karma-formations, and attained to *nibbāna* in the experience of arahantship. It knows that no further rebirth will be undergone.

The second state of consciousness seems perfectly described by the second section of Ud 80, from 'there is no coming or going' to 'it has no object'.[4] This implies that Ud 80 is describing *nibbāna* not as a far-off metaphysical state, or simply *nibbāna* entered at the death of the *arahant,* but (also) as *nibbāna* as it can be experienced during life. It also indicates that *nibbāna* is not an object of consciousness in the full realization of *nibbāna,* but that it is the very state of objectless, supportless consciousness: a revolutionized state of consciousness.

Other passages indicate that *nibbāna* beyond death can also be seen as such a form of consciousness. At S III, 124 and I, 122 Māra is portrayed as looking for the consciousness of a recently deceased *arahant,* asking, 'Where is the consciousness of a recently deceased clansman Vakkali-Godhika supported?' The Buddha explains in each case that 'the clansman Vakkali/Godhika, with consciousness unsupported, has attained *nibbāna (parinibbuto*)'.

These passages on their own could be interpreted to mean that the post-mortem consciousness of an *arahant* does not exist, because it is 'unsupported'. S III, 53–4, however, shows that things can be predicated of a consciousness which is 'unsupported'. A passage at S II, 103 also shows that to be 'unsupported' is not to be non-existent. The passage concerns the consciousness which has no attachment for any of the four nutriments (*āhāra,*) and which is thus 'unsupported' there, nor is it 'growing'. A simile is then used to illustrate this: a ray of sunlight which meets neither a p earth, nor water etc. does not 'alight' (*patiṭṭhita*) anywhere, being 'unsupported' (*appatiṭṭhita*) Such a sunbeam is not non-existent, though it is described as 'unsupported'! Thus one can talk of the post-mortem consciousness of an *arahant* which in some sense exists, but in an 'unsupported' form. Given that the *suttas* indicate that *nibbāna* during life is such a state of consciousness, it is very likely that it is so beyond death, too.[5]

It is, indeed, worth noting that later Buddhist literature also talked of 'unsupported' consciousness (or *citta*) in connection with *nirvāṇa*. The Vajrachedika PPS states:

Therefore, Subhuti, the *bodhisattva,* the great being, should produce an unsupported thought (*apratiṣṭhitaṁ cittaṁ utpādayitavyaṁ*), produce a thought which is nowhere supported, a thought unsupported by visible objects, sounds, smells, tastes, touchables or mind-objects.

Conze sees this as 'final *nirvāṇa*'.[6]

So far comment has only been made on the second half of the Ud 80 description of *nibbāna*. Can the first half also be elucidated in harmony with the analysis advanced so far? A passage of considerable help is D I, 223. Here a monk, after having asked many *devas,* finally comes to the Buddha with the question, 'Where, now, Venerable Sir, do these four great

elements (*mahābhūtā*) stop (*nirujjhanti*) without remainder?' Having rephrased the question, the Buddha answers:

Consciousness, non-manifestive, infinite, accessible from all round (*viññāṇaṁ anidassanaṁ anantaṁ sabbato pahaṁ*)[7]—here it is that solidity, cohesion, heat and motion have no footing (*na gādhhati*) *;* here long and short, coarse and fine, foul and lovely [have no footing]; here *nāma* and *rūpa* are stopped without remainder; with the stopping of consciousness, here, this is stopped.

This is, fairly obviously, a passage on *nibbāna*. as DA 393–4 takes it to be. It portrays *nibbāna* both as (1) a state of consciousness[8] and (2) a state where the material elements and various contrasts 'have no footing' (rather than ending absolutely). and where *nāma* and *rūpa* stop without remainder.

While the reference to consciousness links up with the second half of Ud 80, the other aspect of D I, 223 seems to relate to the first half of Ud 80. In both there is reference to the four material elements. Ud 80. however, then refers to the four formless (*arūpa*) spheres, not mentioned at D I, 223. In these spheres as places of rebirth there is nothing of *rūpa* and as meditational states there is no awareness of *rūpa* in them; only *nāma,* mentality, exists there. Ud 80, then. seems to describe a realm where neither *rūpa* nor *nāma* exist, while D I, 223 says that these have 'stopped' in *nibbāna*. That both are describing the same situation is supported by a passage at Ud 8 spoken on the death of the *arahant* Bāhiya:

Where solidity, cohesion. heat and motion find no footing, there stars do not shine, the sun is not made manifest, there the moon appears not. no darkness is there found. So when the sage, the brahmin. by wisdom knows thus by himself, then he is freed from *rūpa, arūpa,* happiness and suffering.

Here the reference to the four elements having no 'footing' is closely parallel to D I, 223 while the non-appearance of sun and moon are also found at Ud 80. The particular point to note here is that Ud 8 talks of *rūpa* and *arūpa* in place of the *rūpa* and *nāma* of D I, 223; it thus seems justifiable to see the first half of Ud 80 as describing a state where *nāma* and *rūpa* are absent or have 'stopped'. D I, 223 makes the point that in this state, while *nāma-rūpa,* the sentient personality with its mental and physical components, 'stops', the four physical elements of the physical component of the sentient body do not cease, but rather 'have no footing'—this suggests that they have no place in perception.

So far, then, it has been seen that Ud 80 describes *nibbāna* as a state where *nāma-rūpa* is absent, or is 'stopped', and consciousness is objectless and 'unsupported'. Now D I, 223 also refers, in its description of *nibbāna,* to consciousness as being 'stopped'. Can consciousness—in whatever form—be said to exist if it is 'stopped'? Must one accept Buddhaghoṣa's commentary of D I, 223 saying that the 'stopped' consciousness refers to the ceasing of the 'last' (*carimaka*) consciousness of the *arahant* at the time of his death? The answer is, no. 'Stopped' consciousness can occur during

life; it is the same as 'unsupported' consciousness and is not equivalent to non-existent consciousness, This is shown in a passage at S II, 66:

If one does not will (*ceteti,*) plan, or have a latent tendency for anything, then there is no object for the maintenance (*ṭhitiyā*) of consciousness; when there is no object, there is no support for consciousness. When consciousness is unsupported (***appatiṭṭhite***) and not growing, there is no descent of nāma-rūpa. From the stopping (*nirodhā*) of *nāma-rūpa* is the stopping of the sixfold sense-sphere.

This clearly deals with the undoing of the links of *paticcasamuppāda*, specifically with the stopping of the *karma* formations leading to the stopping of consciousness, thence to the stopping of *nāma-rūpa* and the following links. Talk of consciousness being 'stopped', though, is replaced by talk of it being 'unsupported'. As we have seen, the parallel passage at S III, 53–4 shows 'unsupported' consciousness as occurring during life, and it has also been shown that such a consciousness, whether in life or beyond the *arahant's* death, is not a non-existent one.

It can be seen, then, that Ud 80, in conjunction with other passages, indicates *nibbāna,* whether during life or beyond death, as a state where *nāma-rūpa* and consciousness are 'stopped' and consciousness is objectless and 'unsupported'. The S II, 66 shows the connection between these two aspects: it is from consciousness being 'unsupported', and thus 'stopped', that *nāma-rūpa* stops, for the *nāma-rūpa nidāna* arises dependent on the consciousness *nidāna* in its normal, non-stopped state. It is particularly appropriate that Ud 80 should describe *nibbāna* in terms of stopping of consciousness and *nāma-rūpa,* because other passages assert that the central process of ***saṁsāra*** and its suffering is the interplay between these two. E.g.:

Ānanda, in so far only can one be born or grow old or die or decease or be born…in so far only does the round [of ***saṁsāra***] turn for there to be disclosure in this present state, that is to say, *nāma-rūpa* with consciousness (*saha viňňānena*).

Another such passage is D II, 32:

Indeed, this consciousness turns back round on to (*paccudāvattati) nāma-rūpa,* it does not go beyond. In so far only can one be born, grow old, die or decease or be reborn; that is to say [from the extent that] consciousness is from *nāma- rūpa* as condition, *nāma-rūpa* is from consciousness as condition, the sixfold sense-sphere is from *nāma-rūpa* as condition…

This interweaving of these two states exists because consciousness arises with mental and physical phenomena as its objects (as D II, 63 explains, consciousness has *nāma-rūpa* as its 'support') and consciousness then goes on to condition the continual arising of the mental and physical phenomena that comprise its accompanying sentient body. It is attachment that binds these two states together so that consciousness keeps 'turning back round on to' *nāma-rūpa*. The components of *nāma- rūpa,* indeed, act as a

confining ‘home’ for consciousness. This is seen at S III, 9 which describes consciousness as having the four other *khandhas* as its ‘home (*oka*) when it is bound by attachment to them, but that it is a ‘home-abandoner’ when this attachment for any of the five *khandhas* is cut off at the root. It is worth noting, here, that there is ambiguity over whether the *viňňāna khandha* is included in the ‘home’ of consciousness, just as S III, 53–4 omits, and then again mentions, consciousness as one of the objects of attachment of consciousness. This may be a reflection of an equivocation over whether nibbānic consciousness is truly a form of consciousness.

THE NATURE AND STATUS OF NIBBĀNIC CONSCIOUSNESS

The above discussion has indicated that, in the Pāli *suttas,* there are a number of hints implying that *nibbāna* is a ‘stopped’, ‘unsupported’, objectless consciousness. Examination of the epithets of nibbānic consciousness at D I, 223 gives further indications as to its nature. First, it is described as ‘non-manifestive’ (*anidassana,*) a term used also at S IV, 370–1 as synonymous with *nibbāna.*[9] *Nidassana* is variously used to mean ‘visible’[10], ‘appearance, manifestation’[11] or ‘example’, i.e. ‘that which makes manifest’.[12] At M I, 127–8 it is said that just as one cannot, by using paint, delineate or make appear (*pātubhāva*) material shapes in space (*ākāse,*) because space is *anidassana,* so one cannot provoke to anger the *citta* which is immeasurable through the development of loving-kindness. This suggests that *anidassana* can mean not only that which is itself invisible, but also that on which it is impossible to make anything else appear. This would fit the ‘unsupported’ consciousness, for it is objectless and so beyond the ‘manifestation’ of all objects: they gain no ‘foothold’ in it. The above passage also suggests that nibbānic consciousness is, in one respect, like empty space.

D I, 223 also describes nibbānic consciousness as ‘infinite’ (*ananta*). One just might take it to mean that it had some connection with the ‘sphere of infinite consciousness’, but it has been seen that Ud 80 describes *nibbāna* as beyond such a realm. The consciousness of this sphere has ‘infinite space’ as its *object,* while nibbānic consciousness is infinite because it has *no* object. As described at S II, 103 it is like a sunbeam which does not alight anywhere, but continues infinitely. Bearing in mind the image of the *khandhas,* or *nāma-rūpa* as the ‘home’ of consciousness, one can conjure up the further image of infinite nibbānic consciousness as being ‘trapped’ in the khandhic process, and being ‘freed’ from it by non-attachment.

Finally, D I, 223 describes nibbānic consciousness as *sabbato icon@@.* The meaning here is uncertain as indicated in note 7. It may mean that nibbānic consciousness is *accessible* by many meditational routes, or that it *draws back* from everything, being without any object. There is also the

possibility that *pahaṁ* should read ***pabhaṁ*** 'shining', as in a parallel passage at M I, 329–30. Here the Buddha is speaking to Baka the Brahma who thinks he created the world and is superior to the Buddha in knowledge. The Buddha says:

I, O Brahma, knowing solidity as solidity, to that extent knowing that which does not partake of the solidness of solidity (*pathaviyā paṭhavattena*),[13] do not think: [I am] solidity, [I am] in solidity, [I am different] from solidity. I do not think 'solidity is mine', I do not salute solidity.[14]

This is then repeated of the three other elements, creatures, *devas*, Prajāpati, Brahma, four other types of gods, and everything (***sabbaṁ***) Baka replies, 'If, good sir, it does not, for you, partake of the allness of the all, take care lest it be vain, lest it be empty (*tucchaka*)', i.e. what in heaven or on earth could such a thing be? The Buddha[15] then replies: Consciousness, non-manifestive, infinite, shining in every respect (*sabbata pabha*)—that does not partake of the solidness of solidity…of the allness of the all.

The first line of the last quoted passage is almost identical to that of D I, 223 and the parallel of the passage is strengthened by the mention of various gods in the lead up to both. The passage clearly refers to something which does not 'partake' of the nature of various particulars or even the nature of 'all': this must surely be *nibbāna*. Here again, it is described as a form of consciousness, in this case as one which is 'shining in every respect'. This must be because it has the shine of wisdom which is said to have the *supreme pabhā* or *ābhā*.[16] It is like the infinite sunbeam. It is for this reason that in nibbānic consciousness 'sun and moon' are absent and 'the sun is not made manifest; there the moon appears not, no darkness is there found' (Ud 80). The 'shine' of such a consciousness means that the much lesser light of sun and moon are inapprehendable and yet there is no 'darkness'.

If *nibbāna* is a certain form of consciousness, however, it is necessary to face certain subsequent questions as to the status of *nibbāna* understood in this way. As it is unborn (*ajāta,*) should it be seen as a *beginningless* form of consciousness present in all but known only by the *arahant*? Alternatively, is *nibbāna* unborn in some other sense and only pertains to the *arahant*? The first possibility would make nibbānic consciousness somewhat like an inner self (*atta*). Being objectless, however, *nibbāna* could not serve as the subject of experience or perform any useful function in personality. As a 'stopped' consciousness it would seem to entail the 'stopping' of all other *nidānas* which, for a person to exist normally in the world, must function normally. If consciousness is 'stopped', the whole **saṁsāric** world stops with it. It would, then, seem unlikely that nibbānic consciousness should exist in all people or even in *arahants* in normal waking state. However, nibbānic consciousness, being *sabbato pabhā,* might be the same as the *pabhassara citta* of A I, 10. This *citta* is a crucial factor in descriptions of mystical experience in Pāli *suttas.* It will be

examined below in relation to the present question as well as in its own right. Other matters must come first, however, starting with the second possibility outlined above.

Nibbāna is described as *asaṅkhata* (unconstructed, unconditioned) at Ud 80 and elsewhere. How can it come about? S II, 66 gives a clue: 'unsupported' consciousness, shown to be a 'stopped' consciousness, comes about from the stopping of various *saṅkhāras* such as willing. S III, 53–4 also describes the unsupported consciousness *anabhisaṅkhāra* . Ud 80 describes *nibbāna* as without 'functioning' (*pavatta,*) while Miln 325–6 makes clear that the 'functioning', absent in *nibbāna,* is the functioning of *saṅkhāras*. So it seems likely that nibbānic consciousness is 'unconstructed' in the sense of being *no longer constructed*.

This is supported by S III, 86–7 which explains that *saṅkhāras* 'construct a compound' (*saṅkhatam abhisaṅkharonti*) of the five *khandhas:* material shape into 'the state of material shape' (*rūpattāya*) etc., but consciousness into 'what is meant by consciousness' (*viňňānatthāya*). This would mean that, when the *saṅkhāras* suspend operation in *nibbāna,* the first four *khandhas* are not constructed into 'states' of themselves and consciousness is no longer constructed into what is 'meant by consciousness'—it is unconstructed and hardly what one would call 'consciousness' any more. This is in line with the equivocation, noted at the end of the last section, over whether nibbānic consciousness is truly a form of consciousness. That an 'unconstructed' state can have a beginning in time is also supported by Ps II, 126–7: it says of a state of 'stopping' temporarily entered: 'Immeasurable is stopping in the sense that it is unmoving and unconstructed'.

Next comes the question: In what sense is, then, nibbānic consciousness 'unborn'? The clue is in Ud 80–1 where *nibbāna* is described as the 'leaving behind of the born' (jātassa…*nissaraṇa*). Being 'stopped', nibbānic consciousness entails the 'stopping' of all the other *nidānas* of the *paticcasamuppāda,* including 'birth' (*jāti*). In the 'stopped' consciousness nothing of what is 'born' remains; it is 'non-manifestive' like space on which one cannot 'make appear' (*pātubhāva*) material shapes by painting (M I, 127–8); it is objectless and there is in it no 'appearance' (*pātubhava*) of the *khandhas,* a description included in S II,3 in its definition of the *birth-nidāna.* At Ps II, 241 *nibbāna* is 'unborn' because it is the stopping of the five *khandhas* which are 'subject to birth' (*jātidhammato*).

The above does not mean that *nibbāna* did not exist before a *buddha* attained it. One can say that while 'entry' into *nibbāna* (in life or at death) is an event in time, the experience itself is timeless, neither past, present or future (Dhs 1416, Miln 270). Moreover, whether or not any person experiences nibbānic, 'unsupported' consciousness at any time, the timeless 'sphere' of such unconstructed consciousness remains.

This interpretation also means that *nibbāna* during life, 'with remainder of what is grasped at' (*saupādisesa*,) cannot be experienced by an *arahant* all the time: one cannot have objectless consciousness *and* perceive and act in the world. *Nibbāna* during life, then, must be seen as a radically transforming experience, such as is described as the 'destruction of attachment, hatred and delusion' (It 38–9), which may be subsequently re-entered during life. At death only this unconstructed consciousness remains, 'without remainder of what is grasped at' (*anupādisesa*). Nevertheless, the experience of such a transforming state means that the living *arahant* has greatly changed dispositions of thought and action so that he is always one whose 'fires' of attachment, hatred and delusion have been extinguished.

THE APPROACH TO *NIBBĀNA* BY THE SEEING-THROUGH OF EMPTY PHENOMENA

The path to the full experience of *nibbāna* itself involves a variety of mystical experiences. Some of them have been little investigated. In A V, 318–26 there is a number of intriguing descriptions of a *samādhi* bordering on the full experience of *nibbāna*. At A V, 321–3 Ānanda asks the Buddha:

May it be said, Venerable Sir, that a monk's achievement of *samādhi* may be of such a sort that, though he does not attend (*manasikareyya*) to the eye or visible shapes…to the body or touchables…to solidity…to the sphere of infinite space…infinite consciousness…this world or a world beyond; though, whatever is seen, heard, sensed, discerned, attained, sought after, thought round by mind—to all that he does not attend, and yet he *does* attend?

The Buddha confirms that there is such a *samādhi :*

Herein, Ānanda, a monk attends thus: This is the real, this is the excellent; that is to say, the calming of all *saṅkhāras*, the renunciation of all substrate, the destruction of craving, detachment (*virāga*,) stopping, *nibbāna*.

When one compares this description to that of *nibbāna* at Ud 80, one might think that this *samādhi* was the full experience of *nibbāna* as attained by the *arahant.*[17] This cannot be so, however, for the *arahant's* experience of *nibbāna* is such that consciousness has *no* object, while this *samādhi* clearly has an object: *nibbāna* itself. What is more, the contemplations: 'This is the real…detachment, *nibbāna,* and This is the real…stopping, *nibbāna,* known as the 'perception of detachment' and the 'perception of stopping' (A V, 10), *lead, if developed*, to the gnosis of the *arahant* or to the state of 'non-returning' (S V, 133–4); a *samādhi* in which these contemplations occur is thus less than the full experience of *nibbāna*. It is, in fact, better identified with the 'signless' (*animitta) samādhi* or *cetovimutti* as described at M I, 296:

There are two conditions, your reverence, for the attainment of signless *cetovimutti :* not attending to any *nimitta,* and attending to the signless element. A *nimitta* is a perceptual sign or meaningful indication,[18] and the items listed at A V, 321–2 are surely a wide-ranging list of all the main types of 'signs' which may engage the attention. The 'signless element' is a term used for *nibbāna* (as explained here by MA II, 352). A V, 321–2 then seems to describe a *samādhi* in which no attention is paid to any 'signs', but attention is paid to *nibbāna,* the 'signless element', i.e. it describes a 'signless' *samādhi*. As such it clearly is not *nibbāna,* it is still a 'constructed' state (M III, 108).

There is another, quite intriguing description of this signless *samādhi* at A V, 318–9 where Ānanda asks the Buddha: 'May it be, Venerable Sir, that a monk's acquiring of *samādhi* is such that in solidity he is not percipient of solidity (*paṭhaviyam paṭhavī-saññī*) …[this formula is then repeated for each of the items following solidity at A V, 321–2]…and yet he *is* percipient (*saññī*)?'

The Buddha replies that there is such a *samādhi* in which a monk perceives: 'This is the real…detachment, stopping, *nibbāna.*' The description of this *samādhi* is indeed paradoxical. It is not so much that a person just does not attend to solidity etc., but that *in* solidity no solidity is perceived. It is perceived, as it were, as being empty of solidity: *saññā*—'perception, cognition, recognition, interpretation', that which classifies and labels experience (correctly or incorrectly)—does not latch on to a 'sign' as a basis for seeing solidity *as* solidity. Rather, the mind attends to or perceives *nibbāna,* the signless element, that which 'does not partake of the solidness of solidity' (M I, 329–30, above). Not attending to signs of solidity etc., solidity etc. are perceived as empty of themselves, and the mind 'sees through' them and focuses on *nibbāna,* the signless element.

The explanation of the signless *samādhi* in Ps II, 58 sheds light on why the mind should be able to see through phenomena as empty:

When one with great resolution gives attention [to phenomena] as impermanent, he acquires signless liberation. When one who has great tranquillity gives attention [to them] as dukkha, he gains desireless (*appaṇihita*) liberation. When one who has great wisdom gives attention [to phenomena] as *anatta,* he wins void (*suññatā*) liberation.

This means that the signless *samādhi* is one of a set of three states in which there is a very strong insight into the 'three marks'. In such states consciousness, weary of ephemeral, unsatisfactory, conditioned states, is wholly detached from them and views that which lies beyond them. The signless *samādhi* sees through the signs of solidity etc., because there is in it 'contemplation of all conditioned *saṅkhāra* states as limited and circumscribed (*pariccheda-parivaṭṭumato*) (Psm II, 48). Vism 657 comments: 'both as limited by rise and fall and as circumscribed by them',

while Vism 668 explains that in the signless state there is 'effecting the resolution of the compact (*ghana vinibhogaṁ katvā):* In the signless state great insight into impermanence leads to resolving the seemingly stable and lasting signs, presented by the senses, into a complex of components which have weak sign-value to the grasping mind and which themselves come and go so fast as to be insignificant and unworthy of attention. As Ps II, 36 says, in the signless liberation, one construes (*karoti*) no sign in what one contemplates.

The movement of insight up to the signless *samādhi* and then beyond to *nibbāna* is well illustrated at M III, 104ff. A monk is said to be progressively 'attending to the perception' of human beings, a village, the forest, earth (or solidity; it probably refers here to a meditational *kasina*), each of the formless states and signless *samādhi,* with each of the perceptions being empty (*suňňa*) of the previous ones. The items transcended here in the signless *samādhi* broadly correspond to those not attended to in the signless *samādhi* described at A V, 321–2. Both passages, then, seem to describe the signless *samādhi* as one reached by a progressive emptying in which the signs of both gross and subtle phenomena come to be transcended or seen through. M III, 108 goes on to explain that, once the signless *samādhi* is reached, the meditator goes even beyond this, thinking: This signless *samādhi* is constructed and thought out (*abhisaṅkhata abhisa ňcetayita*). But whatever is constructed and thought out is impermanent, liable to stopping'. When this is known, the four 'cankers' are destroyed, arahantship attained and *nibbāna* fully experienced. As has been seen above, this means that consciousness becomes objectless, 'unsupported', stopped and unconstructed. It does not even take *nibbāna* as object, as signless *samādhi* does, but transcends *all* objects so as to *be* that which is the signless element, the desireless element, the void element, *nibbāna* (Ps II,48).

THE BRIGHTLY SHINING (*PABHASSARA) CITTA*

It is now appropriate to investigate this *citta* (heart/mind or mind-set) as a possible candidate for a '*nibbāna* within', as promised earlier, and as a focus for what might be called a Buddhist version of the mysticism of light and illumination,

There is a reference to this shining *citta* in A I, 8–10 which begins by speaking of the 'uncovered' citta which is 'well-directed' (*paṇihita*) so as to realize *nibbāna*. A person whose *citta* is corrupt and disturbed cannot experience the 'excellence of truly *āriyan* knowledge and vision' (*ňāṇa-dassana*) and will go to hell if he dies in such a state. A person whose *citta* is clear and undisturbed can attain such knowledge and would go to heaven. The Buddha then goes on:

I know of no other single *dhamma* which, thus developed and made much of, is pliable (*mudu*) and workable (*kammaňňa*) as is this *citta*. Monks, a developed and made much of *citta* is pliable and workable.

After referring to 'this *citta*' as also supremely 'quick to change' (or 'adapt', *lahuparivatta*) he continues:

Monks, this *citta* is brightly shining (*pabhassara*,) but it is stained by adventitious stains (*āgantukehi upakkilesehi* ***upakkiliṭṭhaṃ***)…Monks, this *citta* is brightly shining, but it is freed (*vipamutta*) from adventitious stains.

There is here a clear reference to a 'brightly shining' *citta* present in all people, be they corrupt or pure, whether it is stained or pure. When passages parallel to the quoted ones are examined, however, it becomes clear that the *citta* referred to is still unenlightened and has an object. Therefore it cannot be regarded as the 'nibbānic consciousness within' all beings. D I, 76, having spoken of the attainment of the fourth *jhāna*, continues:

With this *citta* thus serene, made pure (*parisuddha*,) translucent, without blemish, with stains gone (*vigatūpakkilesa*,) become pliable, workable, firm and imperturbable, he applies and bends down his *citta* for…[the attainment of the six higher knowledges (*abhiňňā*,) including arahantship.]

The terms 'pliable' and 'workable' and the use of the language of purity show that the praised 'developed' *citta* of A I, 8–10 is being described here. It is also confirmed by the use of the term 'with stains gone' which shows that the *citta* in the fourth *jhāna*, poised for the *abhiňňās*, is the developed, 'brightly shining' *citta* 'free from adventitious stains'. Nevertheless, as it still must have an object in the first five, mundane, *abhiňňās*, and as it still has to go on to attain *nibbāna*, it cannot yet be the objectless, 'unsupported, consciousness'.

To free the shining *citta* from stains, not just *samādhi*, but wisdom is necessary. D I, 207–8, commenting on the series of processes at D I, 76ff., classifies the fourth *jhāna* as *samādhi*, but the *abhiňňās* and ***ňāṇadassanas*** which follow it, as wisdom. It is also said that both *samatha* and *vipassanā* are necessary for the *abhiňňās* (M I, 494). As the stain-free *citta* is applied directly to the *abhiňňās*, it must already have some wisdom or insight. This is supported by D III, 101: '…by putting away the five hindrances, by suppressing the stains of mind by wisdom…'

While D I, 76 indicates a jhānic route to freeing the shining *citta* from stains, this is not the only one. At D I, 110 (cf. A V, 86) the Buddha gives a 'graduated discourse' on, among other things, the 'defilement (***saṅkilesa***) of sense desires'. As a result the citta of the hearer becomes 'pliable' and 'clear', 'without hindrances'. This state certainly resembles that of the *citta* at A I, 8–10. S V, 92 confirms that the suspension of the five hindrances is the crucial, if not the only, factor in freeing the *citta* of stains. It specifically refers to these hindrances as *upakkilesas*, impurities, just as various metals are impurities of gold. Such stains are said to prevent *citta* from being

pliable and workable or showing its brightly shining nature. The situation at D I, 110, then, can be seen as one where the hearer of a discourse enters a state which, while not an actual jhāna, could be bordering on it. As it is free from hindrances, it could be seen as 'access' concentration with a degree of wisdom. This then would be sufficient to render the shining *citta* free from stains, though this is more typically the case in the fourth *jhāna* with the mind poised for the *abhiňňās*, as *citta* is there more fully 'developed' and 'made much of'.[19]

Another point to take note of is that, although wisdom is required to free the shining *citta* from stains, one need not be an *āriyan* person (stream-enterer, *arahant*, etc.) for this stainless state to occur. D I, 110, quoted above, continues by saying that the Buddha teaches the four *āriyan* truths to the person whose *citta* is 'pliable' etc. so that the pure, stainless (*vitamala) dhamma*-eye of the stream-enterer arises, as a clean cloth readily takes dye. This shows that the pliable, stain-free state of *citta* precedes stream-entry (which makes one an *āriyan* person), just as it precedes the *abbhiňňās* and arahantship: it can, however, be seen as an ideal spring-board for attaining any of these.

WHAT IS *PABHASSARA CITTA*?

It has been seen that radiance (*pabhā* or *ābhā*) is associated with wisdom, but it can also be seen to be linked to the *devas* of the world of (pure) form (*rūpa loka*,) and to *jhānas* and loving-kindness. *Deva* itself means 'shining' or 'illustrious', and *devas* of the Form-world have such names as *ābhassara* (radiant) and *subhakinka* (lustrous; e.g. D II, 69). The Ābhassara Devas are said to be 'feeders on joy' (Dh 200) and Vibh 424 sees their existence as the result of previously attaining the second *jhāna*.

The It 15 also notes that the Buddha, when still a *bodhisatta*, had been an Ābhassara Deva due to developing a *citta* endowed with loving kindness. Similarly, the discourse following A I, 8–10 praises loving-kindness after referring to the brightly shining *citta*. It can thus be said that in Form-world, *devas*, whose state is gained by *practising jhāna* on loving-kindness, the brightly shining *citta* is relatively unstained. In line with this, Brahma at D I, 247 is said to have an undefiled (*asaṅkhittha*) *citta*.

Bearing the above situation in mind, it is quite plausible to see the 'brightly shining' *citta* as a basic mode of mind in terms of which the 'evolution' of beings through the round of rebirths may be understood. It should be noted that the Ābhassara Devas play a crucial role in the evolution of the world at the beginning of a world cycle (D III, 84–5, cf. D I, 17, A V, 60). It is said that when the world is destroyed at the end of a cosmic cycle, most beings are reborn as Ābhassara Devas. When the physical world begins to re-evolve, the proto-humans who come to inhabit the earth are 'mind-made (*manomaya*,) feeders on joy, shining in themselves

(*sayaṁ-pabha*), traversing the air, continuing in lustre (*subhaṭṭhāyina*) '. This portrays the proto-humans who later decline into present humans (and animals?) as living in a state akin to second *jhāna,* with the natural radiance of the *citta* defiled by little, if anything.

This suggests the role for 'brightly shining' *citta* as a kind of radiant basis which is normally covered and coloured by various defilements and so undergoes various good and bad forms of rebirth according to the degree of defilement. At the purest phase of the world cycle most beings' *cittas* are in a pure state corresponding to the second *jhāna* and they are Ābhassara Devas. They then decline and their *cittas* get recovered by defilements. The stronger the defilement the worse the rebirth: even the diverse creatures in the animal world are 'thought out' (*cittata*) by *citta* (S III, 151–2). But the natural radiance of *citta* can be uncovered by meditation. When the hindrances are suspended and the *citta* has developed some wisdom and the 'bases of psychic power' (see again note 19), it is in its brightest, undefiled state and is poised for the *abhiňňās* and, in particular, for the destruction of the 'cankers' at arahantship (cf. S V, 92). In perhaps less bright state it is equally poised for stream-entry.

As the unstained 'brightly shining' *citta* is supremely poised for arahantship, it could be conceived as the 'womb' of the *arahant* who is sometimes also referred to as the *tathāgata* (see again note 5). The term *tathāgata garbha* as found in the Mahāyāna LS[20] could thus be applied to it. It is described there (p. 77) as 'by nature brightly shining and pure' (*prakṛti-prabhāsvara-viśuddha,*) and as 'originally pure' (*ādivi- śuddha*) *;* it is also said to be 'enveloped in the garments of the *skandhas, dhātus* and *āyatanas* and soiled with the dirt of attachment, hatred, delusion and false imagining'. The realm of the *tathāgata garbha* is said to be 'naturally pure' (*prakṛti-pariśuddha,*) but it appears impure as it is stained by adventitous defilements (*ivagantu* **klesopakliṣṭatayā** *;* p. 222). The LS thus sees the 'brightly shining' citta as the *tathāgata garbha* which it also identifies with *nirvāṇa* (p. 78). But it also holds within itself 'the causes for both good and evil, and all forms of existence are produced by it (p. 220; cf. S III, 151–2 above).

The Pāli material would support the idea of the 'brightly shining' *citta* going through various rebirths, shaping their forms, and as being the fruitful 'womb' of arahantship, the *tathāgata garbha*. Nevertheless, it would not really support seeing it as *nibbāna,* the unsupported, objectless consciousness. A passage at S III, 54 could, though, be taken to imply that it is the brightly shining *citta* which *becomes* nibbānic consciousness. This is a passage on the 'supported' consciousness 'with nutriment' (*sāhāra*) as being attached to the first four *khandhas,* just as five seeds are planted in the earth. The names of the seeds are such that the last four can be seen to correspond to the 'four nutriments' (material nutriment, stimulation, mental volition and consciousness). Here, the ' *khandha-seed'* represents the

'consciousness nutriment' which S II, 13 shows to be equivalent to the consciousness *nidāna* or the six forms of consciousness (visual, aural, nasal, gustatory, tactile and mental consciousness, S II, 4); these are also equivalent to the consciousness *khandha* (S III, 59ff.). This means that the first of the five seeds, the 'root-seed' (*mūlabīja*,) is left to represent the consciousness described as 'with nutriment'.

Now the 'root-citta' would be a very appropriate term for 'brightly shining' *citta*, considering its nature as underlying other more superficial mental activity.[21] Now the above passage then goes on to say that this 'with-nutriment' consciousness may become 'unsupported' (S III, 54–5 as at S III, 53–4, quoted above). In this state it is without attachment for *any* of the *khandha* elements, including that of consciousness which has been argued to be equivalent to the consciousness nutriment. Thus one may say that the unsupported consciousness is a root-consciousness or brightly shining *citta* which has shed its nutriments and any supporting objects.

Another Mahāyāna interpretation of brightly shining *citta* is as *bodhicitta*, the altruistic 'thought of enlightenment'. It is described in the **Aṣṭāsahasrika** PPS thus; 'That citta is no citta since it is by nature brightly shining' (***prakṛtiścittasya*** *prabhasvara*).[22] This is appropriate, as A 1, 10 moves from a reference to brightly shining *citta* to saying that even the slightest development of loving-kindness is of great benefit. This implies that loving-kindness—and the related state of compassion—is inherent within this *citta* as a basis for more conscious development.

The Theravāda tradition takes brightly shining *citta* as ***bhavaṅga*** *citta* (AA I, 60 on A I, 10), the latent dynamic continuum which is the ground state of mental functioning. It flows on uninterrupted in dreamless sleep, while in normal waking consciousness there is a rapid flicking between the operation of this type of *citta* and its more active forms which perceive and react to sense and mind objects. AA I, 61 explains that 'the naturally pure (*pakati-parisuddha*) ***bhavaṅga*** citta is stained by stains which arrive at the moment of impulsion (*javana*) on account of *cittas* accompanied by greed, etc.' ***Bhavaṅga*** citta is thus the ground state of consciousness in any existence and is seen to be defiled when it gives rise to more conscious dealings with the world. It thus more or less fits the model of brightly shining *citta* as a 'root' *citta* which is defiled to different degrees in different levels of rebirth. As the Theravāda school says that ***bhavaṅga*** *citta* has an object, viz. that of previous death-moment,[23] it cannot be objectless unsupported consciousness, just as brightly shining *citta* cannot either.

One possible problem with the Theravāda interpretation is that *jhāna* is said to be composed only of 'impulsion' *cittas*, without any ***bhavaṅga*** *cittas* occurring. How does this square with seeing brightly shining *citta* without stains as occurring in the fourth *jhāna* with the mind poised for the *abhiňňās*? It is the aspect of being poised for the *abhiňňās* that makes the

difference. Vism 139 says that in the mundane *abhiňňās* (the first five), 'impulsion' lasts only 'a single conscious moment' (*ekacittakkhanika,*) being immediately followed by *bhavaṅga citta,* such that the flickering between the two is especially rapid. Thus the stainless, brightly shining *citta* poised for the *abhiňňās* can be seen as *bhavaṅga citta* after all. It is the shining state of mind that is rapidly flicked in and out when accomplishing the *abhiňňās*. In beautiful accord with this is the A I, 8–10 description of the well-developed *citta* as supremely 'quick to change'.

However the brightly shining *citta* is described, it is certainly an essential component of Buddhist mysticism and may even be used as a Buddhist basis for understanding other forms of mysticism. Other mystical traditions also use the language of purity and light. But there is a danger that the notion of 'awareness of brightly shining *citta*' could lead to views about *ātman,* or even God within: the LS in fact says that the *tathāgata garbha* might be held to be *ātman*—which it is not (p. 78).

Summarizing what has been said of the brightly shining *citta* and its potential, it can be seen that there is a progressive cleansing of its surface defilements through the four *jhānas* as these suspend the five hindrances and other 'stains'. This process culminates when the fourth *jhāna* is supplemented by wisdom and the 'bases of psychic power' necessary for the *anhiňňās*. A I, 253ff. compares this state to that of purified gold which can easily be used for many purposes. The mind in such a state can, indeed, overcome many limitations: it can hear things at a great distance, thus overcoming the barrier of space; it can read the minds of others, thus overcoming the self-other barrier; it can remember previous lives of oneself and others, thus overcoming the barrier of time; finally, and most crucially, it can be used as the springboard for attaining freedom from the cankers. With this last *abhiňňā,* we might say, the shining nibbānic consciousness flashes out of the womb of arahantship, being without object or support, so transcending all limitations.[24]

CONCLUSIONS

It has been seen that in the early Pāli material *nibbāna* is less like a totally 'other' transcendent metaphysical realm and more like a revolutionizing of consciousness gone through its mystical stages of *jhānas* and signless *samādhi*. *Nibbāna* has been shown to be a form of objectless, unsupported consciousness (*viňňāna,*) unaffected by the actions of *saṅkhāras* and 'unconstructed'. Being 'stopped', all other *nidānas* such as *nāma-rūpa* and birth stop with it so that it is 'unborn', non-manifestive, like empty space, without object. Material elements and worldly contrasts 'find no footing' in it, it is infinite like a sunbeam which settles nowhere; it also has the 'shine' of wisdom.

The features of the signless *samādhi,* in which the mind sees phenomena as empty of themselves, and the objectless consciousness of *nibbāna* seem to have been taken up in the Śūnyavāda and Vijňānavāda literature, respectively. But the Pāli material is a long way from saying that everything is 'mind-only', although most of what we experience of the world is just our (mis)interpretation of it, and there is no indication that *nibbāna* is seen non-different from *saṁsāra*, since an objectless consciousness is not the same as consciousness with an object.

The brightly shining *citta,* related to the theme of cosmic evolution as well as the evolution of the individual in mystical experience, is given no direct doctrinal interpretation in the Pāli discourses, but the LS sees it as the *tathāgata garbha,* the *Prajňā Pāramitā* literature as *bodhicitta,* and the Theravāda commentaries as *bhavaṅga citta,* the latent dynamic continuum from which normal waking consciousness springs.

The unsupported consciousness represents consciousness as *nibbāna* which springs from the brightly shining consciousness which underlies *saṁsāra*. This relationship is perhaps reminiscent of the Upaniṣadic *turīya* in relation to dreamless sleep. The former also seems to be objectless and the latter is seen in Theravāda as consisting purely of *bhavaṅga* (brightly shining) *cittas*.

My treatment of *nibbāna* might be criticized for portraying it during life as a particular 'experience', rather than an ever-present disposition of the *arahant* shown by his destruction of the cankers. But this destruction first takes place in the objectless 'experience' of *nibbāna* and it is the ability to return to it which makes one an *arahant* and radically alters one's dispositions to thought and action.

I would further argue that it is more useful to look at passages relating *nibbāna* to *viňňāna,* which has a more precise meaning, than to *citta*.[25] In any event, there is support to be found in the contemporary Theravāda practice tradition, as well as in some forms of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Speaking of the reputed *arahant* Acharn Mun, Maha Boowa states: 'Within such a lofty condition mind rests with *dhamma* and *dhamma* with mind; mind is *dhamma* and *dhamma* is mind…This condition is the entire extinction of the mundane world…'[26]

Given the equivalence of *dhamma* and *nibbāna* in such passages as A I, 156 and 158, the above statement seems to portray the *arahant's* mind in a certain state as being *nibbāna*. It can thus be seen that an aspect of the understanding of *nibbāna,* which is absent in the Theravāda tradition of commentaries and Abhidhamma, is to be found in the Pāli discourses and the contemporary Theravāda practice tradition.

Finally, if one would characterize the forms of mysticism found in the Pāli discourses, it is none of the nature-, God- or soul-mysticism of F.C.Happold.[27] Though nearest to the latter, it goes beyond any ideas of

'soul' in the sense of immortal inner 'self and is better styled 'consciousness-mysticism'.

Happold also refers to the mysticism of Love, of Union and of Knowledge and Understanding. As loving-kindness is linked to the brightly shining *citta,* there are aspects of love mysticism in it. Developing loving-kindness to the level of *jhānas* can lead to the 'union with Brahma' at death, though it is transcended in Buddhism in its higher mystical states. Of course, the mysticism of knowledge and understanding is certainly found in it as well.

NOTES

1 By Theravāda I mean the school whose particular ideas are found mostly in the Abhidhamma and Pāli commentaries and in certain late *sutta* materials such as *Niddesa* and Ps. I do not regard the bulk of Pāli *suttas* as Theravāda, because they represent a collection and arrangement of common material circulating in the early Buddhist community. It is only when particular interpretative theories are then applied to such material that one has the 'Theravāda' or 'Sarvāstivāda' etc.

2 The translations given are generally my own; the text references are to the PTS editions.

3 These are the four *viññāṇaṭṭhitis* (maintainers of consciousness)—see D III, 228.

4 One possible disharmony between the two is that Ud 80 says there is no 'maintenance' (*ṭhiti*,) while S III, 53–4 refers to the second state of consciousness as being 'steadfast' (*ṭhita*). Yet the latter passage also clearly suggests that such a consciousness does not 'persist' (*tiṭṭhati*) on any object. Thus, though the consciousness of S III, 53–4 may be *ṭhita,* it has no *ṭhiti* and so can be the same as *nibbāna* at Ud 80.

5 For a discussion of the implications of this for the 'undetermined' question of the state of a *tathāgata* after death see the author's 'The Nature of the Tathāgata' in *Buddhist Studies, Ancient and Modern,* ed. P.Denwood & A.Piatigorsky, Curzon Press, London 1983. This matter is discussed more fully in the author's PhD thesis, chap. 12.

6 E.Conze, *Buddhist Wisdom Books*. London 1958, pp. 47–8; Sanskrit from Conze's Rome editions of Vajracchedika PPS.

7 *Paha* may mean a *ghat* or be a contracted form of *pajaha* meaning 'drawing back' from everything.

8 Buddhaghoṣa DA II, 393–4, tries to avoid the obvious conclusion that a form of *viññāna* is being described as *nibbāna* by glossing the term as meaning *viññānatabban,* 'to be discriminated (by consciousness)'. i.e. while he admits that *nibbāna* is meant, he makes it an *object* of consciousness. This is just distorting the text.

9 With both being 'the destruction of greed, hatred and delusion', i.e, *nibbāna* during life.
10 D III, 217; Vibh 64, 70ff.
11 A IV, 305.
12 Sn 137.
13 MA II, 412: *nibbāna*.
14 Cf. M I, 1–4.
15 The PTS edition of the text takes this speech as still coming from Baka, but it comes more logically from the Buddha; MA II, 413 takes it as coming from the 'teacher', too.
16 S I, 6; A II, 139.
17 This error was made in the original version of this paper.
18 The meaning of *nimitta* is surveyed in the author's 'Signless Meditations in Pāli Buddhism', *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies,* Vol. 9, no. 1 (1986).
19 For *citta* to be poised for the *abhiňňās,* with its shining nature apparent, the four bases of psychic power (*iddhipādā*) need also to be developed; at S V, 227 it is said in connection with these: 'Thus with an open *citta* which is not overgrown he cultivates a *citta* which has a bright shine (*sappabhāsa*)'.
20 D.T.Suzuki, The *Laṅkāvatāra* Sūtra, London 1932; Sanskrit text from P.L.Vaida (ed.), *Saddharma-Laṅkāvatāra-Sūtra,* Dharbhanga 1973. The cited passages are also quoted by W.Rahula, *Zen and the Taming of the Bull,* London 1978, p. 98.
21 Cf. the Mahāsaṅghikas who postulated a mūla-vijňāna as the support of visual consciousness, etc. See A.Bareau, *Les Sectes Bouddhiques du Petit Véhicule,* Paris 1955, p. 72.
22 E.Conze, *The Perfection of Wisdom in 8000 Lines,* Bolinas (USA) 1973, p. 84; Sanskrit from his Rome edition of the Aṣṭāsahasrika PPS.
23 Vism 458; cf. Asl 278.
24 On related matters see the author's 'Developing a self without Boundaries', *Buddhist Studies Review,* vol. I, no. 2 (1983–4).
25 As R.Johansson does in *The Psychology of Nirvāṇa,* London 1969.
26 Ven. Phra Acharn Maha Bowa, *The Ven. Phra Acharn Mun Bhuridatta Thera, Meditation Master,* Bangkok 1976, p. 140. My thanks to Lance Cousins for pointing out this passage to me.
27 F.C.Happold, *Mysticism,* Harmondsworth 1970.

7

THE STAGES OF CHRISTIAN MYSTICISM AND BUDDHIST PURIFICATION: *INTERIOR CASTLE* OF ST TERESA OF ÁVILA AND THE *PATH OF PURIFICATION* OF BUDDHAGHOSA

Lance S.Cousins

There have been many attempts to define or describe the nature of mystical experience: some have argued for a uniform mystical goal, others have asserted the uniqueness of some particular type of mystical experience, still others have sought to erect a hierarchy of stages or levels of mystical experience either within one religion or across the boundaries of traditions.[1] No real consensus has yet been reached.

I am convinced that to think of a single transcendental mystical experience is in certain respects misleading. I would look at the phenomena of mysticism in terms of a mystical way, involving a series of experiences, some quite distinct from others. But I do not wish to prejudge whether mystical experience in different religious and cultural contexts can be regarded as identical. What I wish to argue is that there is considerable *similarity* in the structure and stages of the mystical way as conceived in different traditions. It is this question which I wish to explore here. I believe that this is possible without regard to the general question as to the nature and validity of mystical phenomena. Theistic religions tend to view the stages of the mystical ladder as more or less supernatural and involving some kind of contact with the divine. A psychologist might think in terms of a series of psychological experiences or altered states of consciousness without feeling the necessity of introducing any external criteria. In either case we are dealing with a series of experiences or perhaps transformations which can, I think, be examined in their own right.

The two examples chosen for this paper may seem at first sight far apart: on the one hand, a sixteenth-century Spanish sister, a devout and loyal Roman Catholic, a lady with little higher learning but great involvement in the practice of spiritual life; on the other, a fifth-century Buddhist scholar, probably not without experience on the Buddhist path, but perhaps not of its higher stages. One would not generally think that the two would have much in common. But this is just what seems to be of the greatest advantage to making a comparison. No one would doubt the existence of resemblances between Christian, Jewish and Muslim mystical traditions and explanations

for them through mutual influence would not be lacking. The same would hardly apply if resemblances are found between Theravāda Buddhism and Catholic Christianity. It is also particularly useful to cross the gap between theistic and non-theistic religions which is often portrayed as if it were a yawning gulf.

St Teresa was an extremely fine observational psychologist as is evident particularly in the *Interior Castle,* the work of her maturity. It contains a wealth of fine detail and exact description which is obviously the product of many years of introspection and careful recollection of her own experiences. She also developed considerable skill in giving spiritual guidance and herself drew on the experiences of her fellows in the Reformed Carmelite communities.

We have no comparable account from a Buddhist equally experienced in the path of his tradition, but in Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* (The Path of Purification) we have at least an account of the Buddhist path which enjoys wide authority in the Theravāda tradition and appears to derive from sources based on genuine personal experience. Buddhaghosa was very conservative and a traditionalist. His work is little more than a systematization and reorganization of materials available to him. He can, therefore, be relied upon, but it will be useful to supplement his account of the Buddhist path with materials from the living tradition of Buddhist practice.

He begins the Vism with a verse from S:

> A man of wisdom developing mind and wisdom founded on morality, a monk both energetic and skilful, he might untangle this tangle.[2]

A yogi, he says, needs to know the way to purification, i.e. to *nibbāna*. The Buddha taught various methods and Buddhaghosa gives a number of examples of how the path can be divided, but he points out that in the quoted verse it is divided under the headings of morality (*sīla,*) concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paňňā*). He then elaborates the image. A man of natural intelligence, standing on firm ground and taking up a knife well sharpened on a stone, will be able by making an effort to disentangle a great tangle of bamboos. Similarly a person who is by nature intelligent, established on the firm ground of morality and taking up the knife of insight well sharpened on the stone of concentration with the hand of awareness will, by making an effort, be able to untangle the tangle of craving. Based on this image Buddhaghosa structured his whole Vism on this threefold division as well as upon a parallel sevenfold division.

St Theresa also starts with an image: 'I began to think of the soul as if it were a castle of a single diamond or of a very clear crystal in which there are many dwelling places just as in Heaven there are many mansions'

(T p. 7).[3] We can hardly imagine 'the great beauty of a soul and its great capacity'. It is beyond our comprehension, for God, 'created us in His image and likeness'. We pay too little attention to our souls. 'All our interest is centred in the rough setting of the diamond or the outer wall of the castle—that is to say in these bodies of ours…This castle…has many mansions, some above, others below, others at each side; and in the centre and midst of them all is the chiefest mansion where very secret things pass between God and the soul.' As the simile is elaborated in the book it becomes clear that progression is envisaged from the lowest and outermost, perhaps in a spiral, to the central area where God dwells as King. St Teresa divides this into seven stages, but is at pains to point out that each stage has a very large number of dwelling places, making clear that the path can take a number of different forms, but herself making the division into seven stages the structural basis of the work.

It is probably safe to assume that the traditional Christian threefold division of the mystical way (outlined in the introductory paper of this collection), which would of course have been well known to St Teresa, partly underlies her account. Since the first member of the division is purification or *via purgativa,* it is natural to expect a measure of correspondence between the earlier mansions of the *Interior Castle* and Buddhaghosa's initial section on morality. Neither work attempts to give a full account. St Teresa probably assumes that the reader will have read her other works which gave a fuller treatment of this topic and Buddhaghosa would no doubt refer to his commentaries to Pāli Nikāyas. St Teresa certainly assumes that her reader will know the distinction between mortal or venial sin and the state of grace and she says little about such matters as confession, repentance, penance or observation of the sacraments apart from stressing, at intervals, their value and importance. Equally the Vism assumes that the reader will know the detailed precepts of Buddhist training, the different types of *kamma* and the conditions necessary to constitute its full course (*kammapatha*) which would be capable of bringing about an appropriate rebirth in due course. He often refers, in an abbreviated manner, to relevant texts and lists, assuming their knowledge on the part of the reader.

In fact there is a great deal in common between Buddhist *sīla* and Christian moral theory. Their differences could be accounted for by the basic difference between a theistic and non-theistic system. But then there is a great deal of variation on particular matters also within each of the two traditions. But setting aside general questions it will be more appropriate to examine what the two writers envisage as being of particular value in the spiritual life beyond simple avoidance of wrongdoing.

For the First Mansions St Teresa particularly stresses the need for self-knowledge, humility, courage and not giving way to doubts. To come to the Second Mansions withdrawal from unnecessary cares and business is

needed. Those who have reached the Second Mansions have begun to practise prayer, but are troubled by worldly habits and the bad example of friends. Their perseverance is stretched and they need a firm resolve, and association with others who lead a spiritual life is essential for them. Right attitude to spiritual practice is also important and expectations of sweetness in prayer and the like will be a serious obstacle; it is better to strive to conform one's will to the will of God and be intent on enduring trials. In the Third Mansions St Teresa describes people who have 'lived in an upright and well-ordered way, both of body and mind' (T p. 37); they avoid venial sins, love penance, spend hours in recollection, employ their time rightly, exercise themselves in works of charity to their neighbours, are well ordered in their conversation and dress and govern their households well. But they may experience dryness in their meditation due to excessive desire for spiritual favours and there is perhaps an underlying lack of humility and true detachment. St Teresa seems to imply that they think well of themselves and their behaviour. 'We should look at our own faults, not those of others', she writes, 'for many of those with well-ordered lives are shocked at everything' (T p. 43). Obedience to a good spiritual director is of great value to them.

Buddhaghosa's account of *sīla* is very elaborate, but only some of the more important features can be indicated here. The word is commonly translated by 'morality' or 'ethics', although its original meaning is more like 'nature' or 'character'. Buddhaghosa in fact cites this meaning in connection with canonical passages which refer to unskilful (*akusala) sīla,* but rejects it as the sense which the word has 'in the world' (Vism p. 14). The *sīla* of the Vism is different and not unskiful. To explain it he employs an invented etymology of *sīla* as meaning (1) concentrating (*samādhana,*) i.e. stilling the mind and settling it so that undesirable states do not occur and (2) upholding **(*upadhāraṇa*)**, i.e. acting as the support or foundation for skilful states. For the advantages of *sīla* he refers the reader to various canonical texts, e.g. A V, 1–2 describing skilful *sīlas* as having the goal and advantage of absence of remorse which itself has the goal and advantage of pleasant feeling (*pāmujja*). The series continues with joy, tranquility, happiness, concentration and various stages of insight, knowledge and vision of liberation.

The Vism goes on to give detailed series of numerical classifications of *sīla* from various points of view, partly to define particular types of observance, but mostly to suggest different degrees of observance or levels of practice. Three examples may suffice. (1) *Sīla* is twofold: with limits, in which case it will be broken for the sake of gain, fame, kinsmen, limb or life, or without limits, i.e. kept regardless of such considerations. (2) *Sīla* is threefold: under the overlordship (i) of self, i.e. undertaken to abandon what is not fitting for oneself, (ii) of other people, to avoid the censure of others, and (iii) of *dhamma,* to pay homage to the greatness of the *dhamma*. (3) It

is also threefold as inferior when based on things of the world, middling when undertaken for the sake of one's own liberation and superior if pursued for the sake of the liberation of all beings (Vism 10–16, 46f.).

The most important section on *sīla* is, for us, the last one as it describes its purifying (*vodāna*). It is achieved by not breaking the precepts of training, by penance in case of breach, by absence of sexual activity in any guise, by removal of mental defilements such as anger, jealousy or pride and by developing such qualities as having few wants, complete satisfaction, renunciation, being easily looked after and having generated effort (cf. M I, 13). One should also see the dangers in failure of *sīla* and the advantages of success in it.

Next follows a long section on the thirteen *dhutaṅgas*. According to Buddhaghosa they are the means to develop the above qualities of having few wants and the like in order to bring about the purifying of *sīla*. *Dhuta*, from a verb meaning to shake or wash, may refer to a person who is being washed or cleansed or it can be an abstract noun with the sense of washing or cleansing. *Aṅga*, literally a 'limb', is often used in contexts where it means a factor, constituent or attribute of something. The compound would therefore mean either 'attributes of the person being cleansed' or 'factors of cleansing'. Elaborating further, Buddhaghosa makes the role of the *dhutaṅgas* clear by a simile: *sīla* will be purified and vows successfully accomplished when washed clean of stains by the water of special qualities such as having few wants. The *dhutaṅgas* are, in effect, a series of special practices involving considerable renunciation and asceticism without going to extremes of self-mortification, e.g. eating only alms food, eating only one meal a day, possessing only the one set of three robes, living at the root of a tree or in the open air and sleeping without lying down. One Thai monk described it as 'camping meditation'. Buddhaghosa describes the particular advantages of each of the thirteen, making clear that the purpose is very much to induce a detached state free from expectations and preferences. He also discusses what kind of person they are suitable for. Most of these practices would have parallels in the Christian monastic tradition well-known to St Teresa. Indeed. she herself touches on some of them in her *Way of Perfection*.

Most of the points covered in the first three Mansions of St Teresa seem to be paralleled in Buddhaghosa, although not always obviously so at first sight: e.g. having few wants is used in ways equivalent to humility. The importance of not having expectations and conforming one's will with that of God do not appear explicitly but in various guises in the Vism.[4] A modern teacher writes: 'Do not think of attaining the results of what you are doing—that they will be as you want them to be…As the old saying puts it, "Don't snatch at happiness before it is ripe", because the mind will not then be steadfast, knowledge will not be clear, diligence and energy will diminish, faith will deteriorate and the final result will be revulsion,

disheartenment, laziness and carelessness.' Conforming one's will to that of God may in practice amount, in one context, to complete satisfaction (*santuṭṭhi*) with whatever one gets, in another context to the knowledge that one is heir to one's deeds, in yet another to equipoise (*upekkhā*) and in still another to acting for the sake of *dhamma*. It should occasion no surprise if we find that it is not possible to match concepts on a one-for-one basis. Indeed, it would be very surprising if we could. What we may, and I believe do, find is parallel clusters of concepts functionally similar in their psychological effects.

It is clear that for Buddhaghosa and the whole Buddhist tradition there is an intimate connection between the three aspects of *sīla* and *paňňā,* as is indeed illustrated in the well-known image of the eightfold path as an eight-spoked wheel. Equally, for St Teresa and the long tradition of Christian mysticism which precedes her the spiritual path is founded in purification. The present discussion of altered states of consciousness which sees them purely as the result of techniques or of genetic accident would, I suspect, have seemed trivial to both. For both of them the disciplining of mind and body was a *sine qua non*. One of the clearest explanations of this feature is given by St Augustine in *De Quantitate Animae*,[5] probably following Neoplatonic sources, where he describes seven stages or levels of the soul. In the fourth stage begins 'a mighty struggle for purification' which he describes under the image of cleansing and healing the eye of the soul. At a later stage he points out that just as the injured eye should not be exposed to the full light of the sun before it is fully healed and grown strong, so also the eye of the soul should not be exposed to the light before it is fully cleansed and strengthened lest it may 'think there is in it not only no goodness but even great evil'.

It might be argued that there are forms of mysticism where this is not the case. No doubt St Teresa and Buddhaghosa would admit that there might be individual exceptions. St Teresa comments on occasional cases—exceptions and not the rule—which for her are gifts of the Lord and not for us to judge. They may be a special aid given to weaker brethren. For the Buddhist such cases would simply be the result of practice undertaken in previous lives and hence not real exceptions. For both of them such cases would merely mean that purification had been achieved in some other way and they would expect the effect to be a definite if not necessarily permanent improvement in character. Neither would admit to any kind of higher state without prior purification.

The objection that such views are merely a kind of dogmatism is, I suspect, mistaken. In some states of mind there is an intimate connection between our emotions and attitudes on the one hand and the form taken by the experience on the other. In dream states we can often find that attachment or fear related to a dream object can transform the dream into a nightmare. The same comes across from many accounts of altered states

under hallucinogenic drugs. It is known that the prior setting can have a crucial influence on the course taken by an LSD 'trip'. St Augustine was determined to avoid similar phenomena.

With the Fourth Mansions St Teresa describes the Prayer of Quiet and the Prayer of Recollection where the natural and the supernatural are mingled. These mansions are nearer the King's dwelling and very beautiful; so subtle are the things seen and heard in them that the mind cannot give a sufficiently lucid description of them to make them clear to the inexperienced, but those who enjoy such favours will easily understand. There is nothing ineffable about this stage. Difficulties in description are the same as those which normally accompany any attempt to describe inner experience.

Although St Teresa describes the Prayer of Recollection after the Prayer of Quiet, she comments that it almost invariably begins before it, meaning perhaps that it becomes deeper and fuller as the Prayer of Quiet becomes deeper and more frequent: 'Without the display of any human skill there seems gradually to be built a temple for the prayer already described; the senses and all external things seem gradually to lose their hold while the soul is regaining its lost control' (T p. 59). She uses the simile of the King's gentle call summoning inhabitants who have strayed from the castle to return. Then 'they become markedly conscious of a gentle interior shrinking' (T p. 60) like a hedgehog or tortoise retiring into itself, but while they can do so at will, 'with us it is not a question of our will'—it happens only by God's favour. She suggests that God grants it to those who are already leaving the things of the world.

At this point St Teresa remarks that one should not try to suppress thinking prior to obtaining the absorption, because that would bring more harm than profit. Our effort would get in the way. 'When His Majesty wishes the understanding to cease, He employs it in another manner' (T p. 63).

But the main part of the discussion of the Fourth Mansions is dedicated to the Prayer of Quiet. Its key feature is the experience of a new kind of religious emotion. Here St Teresa distinguishes between spiritual enjoyments (*contentos*) and spiritual joys (*qustos*) in a very careful and precise manner (T p. 46ff.). The former are pleasant emotions aroused by prayer and good works and stem from our own nature even if aided by grace and they are not fundamentally different from strong pleasant emotions in ordinary life, although they may be nobler. But they do not make one holier and may be even connected with the passions and lead then to intense results of an undesirable kind.

The joy or delight in God of the Prayer of Quiet is something quite different. To make the difference between the two clear, St Teresa uses a traditional expression: spiritual joys widen the heart whereas spiritual enjoyments narrow it. She further uses the simile of two fountains. One is

fed with water brought in conduits from a distance and is therefore noisy and requires labour. It represents the spiritual enjoyments which occur particularly in the first three Mansions. The other one draws directly from a spring, is noiseless and represents the spiritual joys of the Fourth Mansions. ‘We experience the greatest peace, calm and sweetness in the inmost depth of our being’, she writes. ‘This joy does not appear to me to originate from the heart, but from some even more interior part, as it were from the depths… it appears to dilate and enlarge our whole interior and to benefit us in an inexplicable manner’ (T p. 54–5).

All of this can be recognized by results: ‘In the after effects and the subsequent behaviour one discerns the true value of the prayer; there is no better crucible to test it’ (T p. 56). If this prayer occurs frequently, the soul will be strengthened in all virtues. St Teresa maintains that the soul is less constrained in the service of God: there is no fear of hell or servile fear of God; the soul has firm confidence in its destiny which is like a dilation or enlargement of the soul, as if the fountain were equipped with some contrivance so that its basin grew larger as the water flowed more freely. She warns, however, that if the health is poor, interior joy may lead to physical weakness and a kind of spiritual sleep or absorption. ‘One person,’ she writes, ‘was in this state for eight hours; she was not unconscious nor was she conscious of anything concerning God’ (T p. 66). This can easily lead to self-deception and is quite different from the genuine case in which there will be joy in the soul and the experience is not long-lasting, nor does it overcome the body or produce any exterior sensation.

In the Fifth Mansions St Teresa describes the Prayer of Union. ‘Do not think it is a state, like the last, in which we dream; I say “dream”, because there the soul seems to be, as it were, drowsy, so that it neither seems asleep nor feels awake. Here we are all asleep, and fast asleep, to the things of the world and to ourselves; in fact, for the short time that the condition lasts, the soul is as if without consciousness, for it has no power to think, even though it may desire to do so’ (T p. 70). It is as ‘a death full of delight’. Hands and feet cannot move and breathing either stops or occurs without the soul realizing it. ‘Neither imagination nor memory nor understanding can hinder this blessing.’ Essentially the soul seems to have left the body in order to abide more fully in God. In this state ‘the soul can neither see nor hear nor understand’. The period is always short and seems to the soul even much shorter than it probably is’ (T p. 73).

St Teresa acknowledges that there are many other kinds of union which she treats as being of diabolic origin. But they are quite different in quality. There is not the same delight and satisfaction of soul nor the same peace and joy.’ The quality is very different. ‘It is as if the one kind had to do with the grosser part of the body, and the other kind penetrated to the very marrow of the bones…What has been said will be sufficient for anyone who has experienced this; for there is a great difference [between the false and

the true].' The clearest indication of the true union is the sense of certainty it leaves behind. 'God implants himself in the interior of that soul in such a way that, when it returns to itself, it can in no way doubt that it was in God and God was in it…Although for years God may never grant it that favour again, it can neither forget it nor doubt that it has been received.' St Teresa in fact cites here the doctrine that God is in all things 'by presence and power and essence'. Indeed, if this certainty is absent, she would say that union of the whole soul with God has not been experienced.

She elaborates the account of the Prayer of Union with the simile of the silk worm—an ugly worm which has to die in order to become a beautiful butterfly. It must spin its cocoon which is compared to good works necessary to prepare for this favour. The image of the emergence of the little white butterfly seems intended to suggest a new purified state of the soul. But the result of union is intense dissatisfaction with worldly things which leads to a great increase in detachment. This results in fresh trials and renewed motivation together with a sense of exile and desire to leave the world. A deep grief arises which 'without any effort on the soul's part, and even at times without the soul wanting it, seems to tear it to pieces and grind it to powder' (T p. 82). The intention seems to be to portray a further process of purification.

Unexpectedly St Teresa goes on to suggest that this Prayer of Union is not the real characteristic feature of the Fifth Mansions. The Lord has the power to enrich souls in many ways and bring them to these Mansions by many other paths than the short cut which has been described' (T p. 87). In fact, the Prayer of Union proceeds from another, much more important union which consists in submitting one's will to the will of God. This is shown by the two consequences of love of God and love of one's neighbour. But then she returns again to the Prayer of Union and compares it to a meeting between a couple prior to becoming engaged. 'In a secret way the soul sees who this spouse is that she is to take' (T p. 94).

In the Vism Buddhaghosa specifically excludes discussion of unskilful and other types of *samādhi* on the grounds that there are too many kinds of them for it to be practical to discuss them all. He also excludes, at this stage, the discussion of transcendent *samādhi*, reserving it for a later section, and limits himself to the definition of *samādhi* as skilful one-pointedness of mind. But he devotes a large space to answering the question how *samādhi* is developed which can be summarized as follows.

Having already purified *sīla,* the meditator should remove himself from possible distractions and 'approach the good friend, the giver of a meditation subject, and receive from among the forty meditation subjects one that suits his own temperament' (Vism p. 89). Having ensured that the monastery in which he lives is suitable to develop concentration, he should sever any minor obstructions such as cutting nails or hair, mending robes,

cleaning the room and so on and 'not overlook any of the detailed instructions for development'.

Comparing his procedures with those of St Teresa we do not seem to meet a clear equivalent of her Prayer of Recollection, although her description does recall Pataňjali's 'withdrawal' (*pratyāhāra*) and the simile of the tortoise is familiar to the Indian tradition. But Buddhaghosa does not describe the process of withdrawal as such. Yet the frequently mentioned guarding of the sense faculties and his description of *jhāna* do imply such a withdrawal. The latter is illustrated by the development of the nimitta in *kasiṇa* practice. It is the stage at which the object of meditation, previously external, becomes a fixed mental impression or an eidetic image and the external object can be discarded. This is clearly a feature of the process of withdrawing the mind within, though of different type than the one described by St Teresa. We may nevertheless assume that in practice the Prayer of Recollection would have been quite recognizable to Buddhaghosa as part of the process of developing *jhāna*.

With the Prayer of Quiet the case is much clearer. St Teresa's description of the distinction between spiritual enjoyments and spiritual joys makes it quite clear that we are dealing with the *jhāna* factors of joy (*pīti*) and happiness, especially the former. I have dealt with this subject extensively elsewhere,[6] so I will now only summarize the matter, Buddhist tradition distinguishes between *sāmisa-pīti* and *nirāmisa-pīti,* effectively 'joy derived from the senses' and 'joy not derived from the senses'. The latter will only be fully developed at a stage in meditation when the hindrances are suppressed and the mind takes as its object a pure idea not in sensory form: the Buddhaghosa's semblance *nimitta.* Technically the senses do not operate at this time, but in practice such moments are intermitted with some sensory perception. Buddhaghosa elaborates different stages in the development of this joy, of which the last is both more stable and free from excitation. So we can loosely affirm that the access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) which precedes full *jhāna* in the Vism account corresponds reasonably closely to St Teresa's Prayer of Quiet without necessarily ruling out the possibility that there are also significant differences.

A modern account may make it clearer: '…by using one of these forms of *kammaṭṭhāna* for controlling the heart with mindfulness, one will gradually be able to curb the "outgoing exuberance" of the heart. Calm and happiness will then arise and develop, and there will be only one thing influencing the heart which will be a knowing of the heart alone without any disturbance or distraction, or there will be nothing which can irritate or disturb the heart to make it fall away from this state. This is the nature of happiness of heart freed from all vain imaginings and thought creations. When this state is attained, the person who is doing the practice will know that which is wondrous in his heart, the like of which he has never

encountered before. This is a deeply-felt state of happiness, more so than anything which he has previously experienced.'[7]

To understand Buddhaghosa'a account of the *jhānas* it is necessary first to remember the *abhidhamma* description of consciousness. This may be compared to one type of colour television screen in which the picture is actually built up by the activation of tiny dots of different colours one after another. Similarly, our conscious experience in which we appear simultaneously to see, hear, remember, feel, think, know is in fact to a large extent a construct. Most of these activities are not simultaneous but successive. They appear simultaneous only because we cannot discriminate them properly, just as we are not aware of the dots on the television screen as successive, but experience them as simultaneous.

So when Buddhaghosa declares that in *jhāna* absorption it is possible for the mind to remain for long periods with the semblance *nimitta* as its object, this is equivalent to saying that there is no articulated thought, no sense perception, no remembering the past and no awareness in the ordinary sense. The mind remains aware of the pure concept that is its object and is alert, lucid and qualitatively superior to ordinary consciousness. For Buddhists this is the consciousness of the Brahma gods.

It is quite clear that there is much similarity between that type of consciousness and St Teresa's Prayer of Union. Both are ecstatic trances involving immobility of the body and the suppression of many of the ordinary mental activities. Both are characterized by peace and joy. Both are also in a slightly ambiguous position in relation to the larger path: the Prayer of Union is really only a kind of short cut and not the direct route which is the union of the will with that of God, while *jhāna* is sometimes portrayed as a side-track in relation to the more direct development of insight. Many more similarities could be elaborated. One might perhaps sum up by saying that *jhāna* is certainly what St Teresa would call union, but whether she would call it union with God is perhaps another matter. For Buddhaghosa the Prayer of Union would perhaps be acceptable as a form of *jhāna*, but probably not as *lokunara* or transcendent jhāna.

In the third section of the Vism when he comes to describe how *paňňā* is developed, Buddhaghosa introduces a new image. Taking the canonical division of the path into seven purifications (*visuddhi,*) he describes the first two stages, purification of *sīla* and of mind, which are equivalent to the subject matter of the first two sections of the Vism, as the root of a plant or tree.

The traditional formulae of the Buddhist teaching such as the faculties, the four noble truths and dependent origination then constitute the soil in which the plant can grow. The body of the plant is made up of the five remaining purifications as stages in the development of insight. Possibly one reason for the image is to indicate that as the body of the plant grows up, so also the root will develop. This is certainly so for *sīla* which

improves as the higher stages of insight are developed and we may assume that equally *samādhi* will advance. It may therefore be no accident that the fifth purification involves a number of *jhāna*-like factors.

Beginning his account of wisdom, Buddhaghosa is careful to define the wisdom with which he is concerned as 'insight knowledge connected with skilful consciousness'. After giving a numerical analysis of different kinds of wisdom in the same way as for the first two sections of the Vism he goes on to treat the doctrinal analyses which constitute the soil, mentioned above, in considerable detail. But we shall turn to the description of the actual development of insight.

It begins with the purification of view which is defined as seeing mental and physical phenomena exactly as they are and hence equivalent to insight knowledge which comprehends to a certain degree the First Noble Truth. The fourth purification, the one accomplished by crossing over doubt, is defined as comprehending the conditions which give rise to phenomena and hence as equivalent to understanding the Second Noble Truth. All of this might be expressed in terms of realizing the worthless and relative nature of ordinary existence and ceasing to value it—not merely conceptually but rather as an existential realization and letting go.

The fifth purification due to knowing and seeing what is path (*magga*) and what is not path is explained as equivalent to comprehending and developing the Fourth Noble Truth, i.e. the Eightfold Path. It is achieved by seeing the general characteristics of phenomena of impermanence, suffering and not-self. From this arises what is called young insight (*taruṇa-vipassanā*), equivalent to a direct perception of the constant rise and fall of phenomena. At this point the Vism introduces a description of the ten defilements of insight (Vism p. 633f.). Most of them are states which appear in themselves desirable: joy, knowledge, tranquility, happiness, mindfulness and equipoise are included in the last. Their danger is that the meditator may be overwhelmed by the intensity of these experiences and imagine that he has already obtained his goal. Only when he is able to distinguish these tempting but illusory states from the true path is the Fifth purification completed and only then can he continue his journey.

This may all seem far from St Teresa's account of the Sixth Mansions. Yet a great deal of it is concerned with the problems of recognizing the exact nature of particular experiences. St Teresa gives very precise descriptions in order to differentiate between locutions, visions and raptures derived from God, those originating in the imagination and those coming from the devil. While one may not agree with her cosmology it would be foolish to dispute the accuracy of her perceptions or the genuineness of her experience. Her account is very detailed. No less than eighty of the 206 pages of the standard Spanish edition are taken up with the Sixth Mansions.

To summarize it in brief, these Mansions begin with severe trials, both internal and external. The soul has been wounded with love for the Spouse

and seeks more opportunity of being alone, trying so far as is possible, to someone in its state, to remove everything which can disturb it in this solitude' (T p. 99). But 'these very trials make it fly still higher' (T p. 107). The result is an awakening of the soul arising in various ways. One of these ways is by means of locutions which St Teresa discusses at length. In due course God confirms the Spiritual Betrothal by bestowing raptures. These may involve imaginary or intellectual visions or an experience of the flight of the soul. Sometimes the occurrence of raptures becomes very frequent and they cannot be avoided even in public. An uncontrollable jubilation may occur. 'It may last for a whole day and the soul goes about like one who has drunk a great deal, but not so much as to be deprived of his senses' (T p. 143). And not as someone in a state of hysterical excitement which St Teresa is also able to distinguish clearly. But such experiences also greatly increase the sense of sorrow for sin. Both intellectual and imaginary visions of the presence of Jesus may occur. Various truths may be revealed. It may be seen how this world 'is all lying and falsehood and as such cannot endure' (T p. 171). 'It is a very great truth that we have no good thing in ourselves, but only misery and nothingness; and anyone who fails to understand this is walking in falsehood' (ibid.). Finally she describes a kind of spiritual dying which precedes entry to the Seventh Mansion,

Only a little of this could be paralleled from the Vism, but probably nearly all could be found somewhere in the Buddhist tradition. By way of example let me cite a passage written by a contemporary meditation master: 'As for external *nimittas* which come and go, one may or may not know whether a *nimitta* is external or arises from oneself. But when one has become skilled with internal *nimittas* which arise from oneself, one will be able to know which are external *nimittas*. External *nimittas* are associated with many different happenings of people, animals, *pretas, bhūtas,* the son of a *deva,* a *devatā,* Indra or Brahma, any of which may at that time be associated with one's *samādhi,* even as one talks to a guest who comes on a visit.'[8]

The Vism continues with the sixth purification and gives a full account of the eight contemplation knowledges which represent the stage of strong insight (*balava-vipassanā*). Buddhaghosa explains the first seven knowledges with a simile. A man fishing with a net reaches into it and takes hold of a snake. Thinking it to be a fish, he is delighted. This is a figure for our delighting in ***saṁsāra***. When he sees the three marks on the head of the poisonous snake, his delight changes to fear. This represents the first two contemplation knowledges which comprehend the three signs of impermanence, suffering and not-self and lead to our realizing that ***saṁsāra*** is a fearful place. Realizing the danger the man experiences revulsion towards the snake in his hand and feels a strong desire to be free from it. Similarly the meditator knowing the danger in compounded things experiences revulsion for them and arouses a strong desire for liberation.

The fisherman seeks to get free and unwraps the coils from his arm starting with the tail. This corresponds to the contemplations on emptiness (*suňňātā*) which characterize the seventh contemplation knowledge. Finally the fisherman swings the snake two or three times around his head in order to weaken it and throws it away from him. He then scrambles back up on to dry land and stands looking back at the way he had come and thinking 'I am freed from a great snake'.

A modern master writes: 'Of the nine aspects [of insight knowledge]… not all of them occur to all aspirants. Even their occurrence does not necessarily take place in that order. Any one of the seven may take place, to be followed immediately by the eighth and the ninth.'[9] It is not clear how far Buddhaghosa would agree with this, but the difference is perhaps fairly typical of the kind of variation one finds between the practice tradition and the theoretical literature.

The eighth contemplation, knowledge, is portrayed as a stage in which no further effort is required and equipoise is well established. It is perhaps worth mentioning that at this point the meditator can only wait for the right conditions to occur for the break-through to the supramundane. Buddhaghosa illustrates it with the simile of the land-finding crow which may be carried on board ship. If there is land in sight it will go towards it. If not, it will remain on board. Likewise if this knowledge sees *nibbāna,* the sphere of peace, it will abandon the whole process of conditioned things and leap forth to *nibbāna*. If not, it will continue with conditioned things as its object. One might note that this is the kind of psychological situation in which a theist would have recourse to notions of grace or supernatural favour. The Buddhist of course interprets it in terms of the accumulation of *pāramī* and the law of relational conditions. St Teresa's Sixth Mansions and the account given by Buddhaghosa of the sixth purification have at least this much in common: both describe an acute rejection of ordinary worldly life in order to make a further extraordinary leap.

For St Teresa this brings us to the Seventh Mansions where the soul arrives by means of an intellectual vision in which the Trinity is revealed: 'First of all the spirit becomes enkindled, as it were, by a cloud of the greatest brightness…these three Persons are distinct and yet, by a wonderful kind of knowledge which is given to it, the soul understands as most profound truth that all three Persons are one Substance and one Power and one Knowledge and one God alone; so that what we hold by Faith the soul may be said to grasp by sight, although nothing is seen by the eyes, either of the body or of the soul, for it is no imaginary vision' (T p. 182). Henceforward they are constantly present. The soul 'perceives quite clearly… that They are in the interior of its heart—in the very interior, in some very deep place'. Yet such a person is not entranced: 'In all that belongs to the service of God it is much more alert than before; and, when otherwise occupied, it rests in that happy companionship.' Even on occasions when

this experience is not 'realized so fully', some awareness remains. St Teresa compares it to being with companions in a very bright room when the shutters are closed. Even in the darkness one retains an awareness that the others are present. She also suggests that it is as if the soul is divided into two parts. One part remains undisturbed even when the other is concerned with trials and occupations.

St Teresa appears to distinguish the Seventh Mansion from the Spiritual Marriage itself which takes place at a later point. She writes: 'When granting this favour for the first time, His Majesty desires to reveal Himself to the soul through an imaginary vision of His most sacred Humanity' (T p. 185). She points out that this will take different forms for different people. It seems, however, that the more normal form of the Spiritual Marriage is an intellectual vision more subtle than the previous ones in which 'the Lord appears in this centre of the soul'. This is much more central, interior and stable. The difference between the Spiritual Marriage and the Spiritual Betrothal which occurs in the raptures of the Sixth Mansions is the same, says St Teresa, as that between two betrothed persons and 'two who cannot be separated any more'. For her then the Spiritual Marriage is not a mere union in which two things have been brought together but could be again separated. 'In this other favour of the Lord it is not so: the soul always remains with its God in that centre' (T p. 187). Again: 'It is like rain falling from the heavens into a river or spring; there is nothing but water there and it is impossible to divide or separate the water belonging to the river from that which fell from the heavens.' She also gives as similes a tiny streamlet entering the sea and light entering a room through two large windows and becoming one inside it. 'It is here that the little butterfly of which we have spoken dies, and with the greatest joy, because Christ is now its life.' All this is perhaps best summed up when she declares: 'It is quite certain that, when we empty ourselves of all that is creature and detach ourselves from it for the love of God, that same Lord will fill us with Himself.' (T p. 188–99)

It is very interesting to find that Buddhaghosa's Seventh purification is also an experiential realization of fundamental doctrine, in this case the Four Noble Truths. At the moment when the path of stream-entry, or one of the higher paths, is aroused a number of things are accomplished: defilements are abandoned, some temporarily others permanently, conditioned things are relinquished as objects supporting the mind, *nibbāna* becomes the object of consciousness, the thirty-seven states connected with awakening become fixed (*vāsanā*) in the personal continuity and the Four Noble Truths are comprehended by a single knowledge. This amounts in a sense to the last achievement. 'By making cessation its object, path knowledge reaches, sees and pierces the Four Noble Truths' (Vism p. 690).

This is a highly sophisticated understanding of the objects of the four truths: With respect to the first truth one knows: '*dukkha* is the conditioned'; the second: 'arising is the cause of the conditioned'; the third:

'cessation is the unconditioned'; and the fourth: 'path is the means to the unconditioned'. Each of these knowledges performs a particular function. The first truth is to be comprehended, the second abandoned, the third realized and the fourth developed. According to Buddhaghosa a single path of knowledge accomplishes all these four functions in a single moment. 'Just as a lamp performs four functions simultaneously in a single moment—it burns the wick, dispels darkness, makes light appear and uses up the oil.' This is really quite a startling statement in *abhidhamma* terms and ought really to imply that the conditioned and the unconditioned are the same thing, although of course Buddhaghosa does not draw this conclusion. What it certainly does indicate is a state in which a knowledge arises which is permanently impressed in the mind and involves an awareness of the nature of the phenomenal world, abandonment of mental defilements, direct experience of the unconditioned and the structuring of consciousness in terms of the factors of the path and of awakening, etc. This is potentially accessible at all times.

I do not wish to argue that the Trinity and the Four Noble Truths are identical or even that one is a misunderstood form of the other. Both however are statements of the relationship between the ultimate and the temporal. They are therefore functionally similar in the present context. Both also involve reoriented or fundamentally changed outlook and some kind of restructuring of consciousness. With St Teresa's description of the Spiritual Marriage as such we are on less firm ground. Of course, the stream-enterer is the 'breast-born son of the Buddha', 'heir of *dhamma*', he has joined the family (*gotra*) of the Buddhas, and so on. Whether this amounts to anything similar is hard to assess. The difficulty is, however, that St Teresa does not really make clear the distinctive features of this stage.

With the effects of the two, however, we are on firmer ground. In the words of St Teresa, 'there is a forgetfulness of the self which really seems no longer to exist' (T p. 193). The motivation is renewed and there is 'great interior joy and much more peace'. Desire for union is partly replaced by desire to serve the Lord. Fear of death ceases and there is no longer desire for consolations and favours. 'These souls have a marked detachment from everything and a desire to be always either alone or busy with something that is to some soul's advantage.' Love is increased and if negligence occurs, the soul is awakened by God through an impulse from the interior of the soul which awakens the faculties. The soul is 'almost always in tranquility' and 'has an unwavering certainty that it comes from God'.

Compare this with the stream-enterer who is particularly characterized by the absence of the three fetters of *sakkāyadiṭṭhi*, often translated as 'personality belief', of adherence to *sīla* and vows as a means to liberation and of doubt. Elaborated, this means that the view of self is removed, attachment to the body given up, ritualism is dropped and certainty arising

from seeing *nibbāna* is always present. Equally defilements in general are reduced and wrong actions of the more serious kind will no longer occur.

Many more detailed comparisons would be possible than are given here. To enumerate them would require a book rather than a paper. What I would wish to argue in this context is that there are between the accounts of St Teresa and Buddhaghosa a whole series of similarities. In particular the models of the path which both of them give run parallel. Each begins with purification, each moves on to states of interiorization, joy and peace, then to trance phenomena, then to rejection of the world combined with non-normal acquisitions of knowledge, and each finishes with a transformatory knowledge which remains permanently accessible. Although there are many differences of detail and a very different context, the general structure is remarkably similar.

NOTES

1. See for example S Katz (ed.), *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis,* London 1978; and P.G.Moore, 'Recent Studies of Mysticism', *Religion* III, no. 2 (1973), pp. 146–56.
2. S I, 13=p. 163; also *Udānavarga* v. 156.
3. P. Silverio de Santa Teresa, *Obras de Sta. Teresa de Jesus,* Burgos 1917. vol. IV, pp. 1–210. (= T, i.e. the text of *Interior Castle*.) I have mostly used the expression 'mansions' rather than 'dwelling places' as this is still the most familiar translation of *John* XIV, 2.
4. For example, in the above discussion of the advantages of the thirteen ***dhutāṅgas***. It is not explicitly mentioned, but it is certainly part of the force of what Buddhaghosa is saying.
5. *The Greatness of the Soul,* tr. J.M.Colleran, London 1950, pp. 98–104. Nevertheless, Augustine does not repudiate this basic structure of the spiritual path when he moves further away from Neoplatonism. Elements of it are reformulated in various of his writings, e.g. *Serm*. 330.3.
6. 'Buddhist *Jhāna:* Its nature and attainment according to the Pāli sources', *Religion* III (1973), pp. 115–31, esp. p. 120f.
7. Phra Mahā Boowa Ňānasampanno, *Forest Dhamma,* tr. Bhikkhu Paňňāvaddho, Bangkok 1973. p. 11. The excerpt included in Jack Kornfield, *Living Buddhist Masters,* Santa Cruz 1977, p. 169 omits part of this passage.
8. Ibid., pp. 18–19.
9. Phra Acharn Thate Desaransī, *Dhamma in Practice,* tr. Paňňābhāsa Bhikkhu & Siri Buddhasukh, Bangkok 1977, p. 88; also p. 40 and p. 255. The list of nine is reached by including ***saccānulomikañāṇa*** as the ninth.

8
LIVING BETWEEN THE WORLDS: *BHAKTI* POETRY AND THE CARMELITE MYSTICS

Deirdre Green

[The mystic] thinks of herself as a person suspended aloft, unable to come down and rest anywhere on earth or to ascend to Heaven.[1]

Thus St Teresa of Avila describes the spiritual pain and torment created by the mystic's longing for God. In proportion as the mystic's yearning for union with the divine Being increases, so too does his or her acute awareness of his or her own shortcomings, sins, failings and finitude. The mystic is struck between two worlds—that of the divine and that of the everyday; the former seems out of reach and the latter cannot satisfy.

The purpose of this paper is to explore theistic mysticism as exemplified by the Spanish Carmelites St Teresa of Avila and St John of the Cross on the one hand and some of the *bhakti* poet-mystics on the other. The investigations will be undertaken particularly with a view to the attitudes shown to 'this world', namely the material world of our day-to-day activities with all its limitations and frustrations, and the 'other world' or the realm of the divine which the mystic claims to encounter directly in personal spiritual experience.

As we shall see, some very close similarities of expression and symbolism between these particular Christian and Hindu forms of mysticism may be observed. They both illustrate a type of experience in which the mystic feels a more or less constant sense of suffering, pain and disorientation in spite of the joy and bliss that also often accompanies this experience due to the awareness of distance or separation between the mystic and the Deity which brings about the conflict of 'living between the worlds' and the inability to reconcile these worlds once and for all. I shall also suggest that the theories of Victor Turner regarding 'liminality' may throw some light on the stance of these types of mysticism.

It may be helpful initially to outline what is meant by 'theistic mysticism'. Over the years scholars have attempted to put forward various definitions of mysticism as a phenomenon, but it is difficult to find a single definition that will fit all cases. Within the context solely of the mystics to be discussed here, however, we are concerned with what is perceived as an unmediated inner experience of a personal Deity. The key element of this

type of religious experience is this encounter with the personal divine Being within the depths of one's own soul or self. Such experiences are deeply felt and transforming personal experiences which may alter the course of one's whole life and through which one feels that divine reality has been revealed to oneself. The mystical 'journey', the process of self-integration and integration of the self with the reality thus revealed, culminates in theistic mysticism in union with the divine Being.

It should be noted, however, that there are other forms of mysticism not discussed in this paper, equally worthy of attention, from which theistic mysticism must be distinguished.[2] For example, in monistic mysticism the mystic, rather than enjoying a relationship of communion with a personal Deity, merges into and becomes one with a non-personal divine Principle; or in nature mysticism the beauties of nature are seen as revealing divine reality. Again, in Buddhist forms of mysticism, if indeed Bhuddist spiritual experiences can be classed as such,[3] the content of spiritual experience is not reified, that is to say, the experience is not seen as referring to a union with a substantial divine Being or Principle which has reality of its own independent of the experience, but is seen simply as a transcendent state entailing insight into the true nature of ourselves and reality.

The suffering brought about by the constant sense of separation from God in theistic mysticism is well illustrated in the writings of St John of the Cross (1542–91). He was a contemporary, friend and fellow Carmelite of St Teresa and many correspondences between their writings can doubtless be traced to mutual influence, while others seem rather to be based on the fact that they describe what appear to be similar spiritual experiences. St John's prose works show a great depth of theological learning with meticulously detailed analyses and expositions. His poetry is, by contrast, rich in colour and texture and full of symbolic complexity (he is widely acclaimed as one of Spain's greatest poets).

St John is one of those writers who conceive of the mystical path as consisting of more or less distinct phases of transformation or sequences of attainment of more and more exalted levels of religious consciousness and understanding. Like many other writers who put forward such schemes of mystical progress, however, he emphasizes that such 'stages' of experience represent only a broad generalization or rough scheme; the stages intermingle with and merge into each other so that St John does not mean to imply that mystical experiences fall into a rigidly strict sequence. He utilizes the classical three stages of Catholic mysticism—purgation, contemplation and union—interspersed with what he calls the Night of Sense and the Night of Spirit.[4] We shall be particularly concerned here with St John's two 'nights'.

These are both times of terrible spiritual suffering and trials. The soul suffers great aridity and can no longer find the consolation and sweetness that it used to have in spiritual things. It is profoundly conscious of an inner emptiness, feeling that God has deserted it, and suffers the agonies of

separation from God and of seeing its own utter unworthiness. It feels acutely and is painfully conscious of its own inadequacies and iniquities. The external things of the world and of the senses also give no joy so that the soul feels lost, wandering in darkness, unable to find stability and happiness either in this world or in the other world. These nights of sense and spirit are purificatory processes, leading ultimately to a deeper knowledge of God; the soul is tested by its trials and sufferings almost to breaking point, until a crisis is reached which will carry the mystic over the threshold to a new and higher level of religious understanding.

The two nights are very similar in their general effects, as outlined above, but whereas in the night of sense, which occurs after purgation and before contemplation, the senses and imagination are purified, in the night of spirit, after contemplation and before union, the 'higher faculties', that is, the understanding, memory and will, undergo this purificatory process. The nights are processes of transition from one form of spiritual awareness to another, demanding great adjustments in the mystic's orientation. An interior struggle is going on between the limited life of his humanity and the greater life of the divine which is being revealed. The mystic must die to the limited self with all its narrow and hedonistic desires and attitudes in order to be reborn in God. St John in fact says that the pain of the night is like dying and that the soul must die a living death until it is transformed.[5]

Here already a point of interest may be noted in connection with Victor Turner's studies. As an anthropologist investigating ritual action, particularly among the Ndembu of north-west Zambia, Turner has developed, from his own fieldwork and from the earlier research of Van Gennep and others on rites of passage, a concept which he calls 'liminality' and which has since attracted considerable interest among scholars of religions in general. According to Turner people or objects playing a key role in the rituals he investigated are in a liminal state, that is, they elude or fall between the boundaries of the normal classificatory system of their culture. They are 'betwixt and between' the usual states or conditions assigned by social structure or intellectual convention; a concept which, I suspect, may elucidate the feeling of living at the interface between two worlds shown in the experiences discussed in this paper, with their accompanying dual emotive tone (of sorrow and joy, as shall shortly be illustrated) and polarized frame of religious reference (this world/other world; finitude/infinity; humanity/God).

We may leave aside here Turner's particular conclusion regarding the Ndembu, since he also demonstrates that liminality is a concept of considerable importance for the study of religion in general and not only in a ritual context. He lists various characteristics typical of those in a liminal state, some of which will be seen to correspond, as we proceed, with the evidence given by the mystics discussed in this paper. For the present we may note that the liminal state, according to Turner, is frequently linked to

death and to darkness as are the spiritual trials of St John; and that people in liminal state often exhibit humility, acceptance of suffering, total obedience to religious dictates, withdrawal from the usual social norms and roles of their culture, stripping off of wordly distinctions and status in search of simplicity and equality, and repudiation of property, privileges, material pleasures and sexuality.

All these characteristics are marked in the Christian monastic tradition, as Turner himself discusses, noting that 'Nowhere has this institutionalization of liminality been more clearly marked and defined than in the monastic and mendicant states in the great world religions.'[6] He further uses the term *communitas* to refer to 'institutionalized liminality' or the attempt to construct a community of individuals bonded together by liminal experience.

St John's conception of the spiritual path is effectively illustrated in his poem 'The Spiritual Canticle' which uses the language and imagery of the Song of Songs to recount the quest of the bride (the soul) for her divine bridegroom. We are fortunate in that St John himself wrote long commentaries on his major poems in which he explains in precise detail how the allegories used are intended to illustrate the phases of the mystical life. 'The Spiritual Canticle', he says, deals with the whole course of the mystical path. We shall be concerned here mainly with those aspects of the poem that deal with the two nights and with the experiences connected with separation from God; however, as we shall see, since the stages of mystical experience in St John's scheme merge into each other, the experience of the night and of separation is in fact more or less continuous. In the opening verse of the poem the soul longs for union with the bridegroom; she has been wounded by an arrow of love (a symbol which we shall find reflected in the writings of St Teresa and the *bhakti* mystics) and cries out to the bridegroom to reveal to her how she may find him:

> Where have you hidden,
> Beloved, and left me moaning?
> You fled like the stag
> After wounding me;
> I went out calling You and You were gone.[7]

A number of verses follow which describe how the bride seeks the bridegroom with all her faculties and with the aid of angelic intercessors, personified as shepherds and sheepfolds respectively. She cultivates virtue, represented as journeying to the mountains, and spiritual exercises (= journeying to the waters); she ignores the temptations of the world (= wild beasts) and denies herself the pleasures and gratifications of the material realm (= refusing to pluck the flowers by the wayside). Although she is able to see traces of the beauty of the Beloved in the world of nature which

he has created, this is no possible substitute for seeing him face to face. She soon realizes that nothing less than her Beloved's presence will satisfy her; the sight of the 'messengers' (God's traces in the physical world) only increases the agony of 'love-in-separation':

Oh! who can heal me?
Give me at once Thyself,
Send me no more
A messenger
Who cannot tell me what I wish.

All they who serve are telling me
Of Thy unnumbered graces;
And all wound me more and more,
And something leaves me dying,
I know not what, of which they are darkly speaking.

But how thou perseverest, O life,
Not living where thou livest;
The arrows bring death
Which thou receivest
From thy conceptions of the Beloved.

Why, after wounding
This heart, hast Thou not healed it?
And why, after stealing it,
Hast Thou thus abandoned it,
And not carried away the stolen prey?[8]

St John's forms of expression and symbolism here are very similar to those used by the *bhakti* poets when describing the mysticism of love-in-separation. Like those poets he makes use of romantic symbolism of the secular love poetry of his age, adapting its techniques and style to spiritual themes. (This is known in Spanish as *divinizacíon*.)

St John comments on the above verses that the soul complains of God's absence with particular agony because it has abandoned all wordly things on account of its consuming desire for union; yet it still has to endure the sense of distance from God.[9] We see again, then, that the soul can find no comfort or resting place in either of the two worlds.

The heart cannot rest in peace without the possession of something, and when its affections are placed [i.e. given to God], it has neither the possession of itself nor of anything else; neither does it perfectly possess what it loves. In this state its weariness is in proportion to its loss until it shall enter into possession and be satisfied; for until then the soul is as an

empty vessel waiting to be filled, as a hungry man eager for food, as a sick man sighing for health, and as a man suspended in the air without support to his feet.[10]

Compare St Teresa's statement that the mystic is like a person suspended aloft, unable to rest either on earth or in heaven; a vivid illustration of the 'betwixt-and-between' nature of the liminal state.

St John speaks of the trials of the dark night in terms of an inner fire which purifies, purges and transforms the soul until it is refined 'like gold in the crucible,[11] and itself becomes a 'living flame of love'.[12] He adds that '… when a soul is on fire with love…it will feel as if a seraph with a burning brand had struck it—already glowing as coal or rather all aflame—and had burnt it utterly. When the burning brand has thus touched it, the soul feels that the wound it has received is delicious beyond all imagination…The soul beholds itself now as one immense sea of fire.'[13]

I must state at this point that I do not by any means wish to imply that theistic mysticism has no sense of joy or that it is unduly pessimistic because of the tension and suffering expressed. Indeed, paradoxically, there is a joy in the suffering itself; the 'night' is not a wholly negative process, for it is also a guiding Light. Mystics say that if we can learn to accept our suffering and to empty ourselves of all worldly attachments, both of which, incidentally, Turner finds to be attributes of the liminal state, we shall find that our suffering is transmuted to joy and love and that we become filled with the divine life. This is quite apart from the fact that the mystic has moments of unitive experience when the suffering of living between the worlds is transcended, when the two worlds seem briefly to unite as the mystic enters into contemplative communion with God. But it seems to me that many previous studies of mysticism have focused almost solely on the final goal, the culmination of mystical experience, the unitive state with its associated joy and religious bliss.

If only to redress the balance, it is important to note that in certain types of mysticism the sense of suffering and of separation from the Deity takes equal prominence. Indeed, in St John's writings the night never really ends; one enters it near the beginning of the spiritual life and never really emerges from it, although there are moments of respite when the sufferings are only intermittent. The trials of the soul never quite cease; they merely reappear under different forms. The further we progress along the mystical way the more deeply we become aware of our own shortcomings and inadequacies and the harder and more difficult the trials and testings become. The night does not end until the soul achieves perfect union with God; but St John, as a Christian, holds that completely perfect union cannot be attained in this earthly life but only in the life to come in the other world. The theological belief that we can never fully know God in this life, then, is crucial to the stance of this type of mysticism. The tension between this world and the other world is more or less constant.[14]

St Teresa of Avila (1515–82), unlike St John, was no learned theologian and her writings show a direct simplicity and a down-to-earth, unpretentious humour. In many ways she comes over as a quite different personality from St John, and yet she also speaks at length of the suffering of the mystical life and of the great distress and confusion felt by the soul as it is torn between its desire for earthly things and its growing love for God; and, like St John, she often uses imagery reminiscent of the Song of Songs or refers to this scripture to illustrate a point. Perhaps even more than it is the case with St John's writings, however, her teachings illustrate the ambivalent emotive tone of suffering for God's sake—that is, love-in-separation contains elements of both suffering and joy. Indeed, Teresa, like many Christian mystics, sees suffering as something to be embraced, because it is a way of imitating Christ, as something to be valued, because it shows us that God is working in us.

I am reminded of an apocryphal story about Teresa which illustrates both this belief and her sense of humour. During a period of intense spiritual suffering and of endless worldly annoyances over the organization of her Carmelite order, Teresa was out on a journey one day when she fell into a ditch and was covered in slime; no doubt she felt that on top of all her other troubles this was the last straw. Then suddenly a divine voice spoke to her: 'Do you not know, Teresa, that this is how I treat my friends?' To which she retorted: 'Well, if that's so, it's not surprising that you don't have many of them, is it?'

Of particular relevance to our theme is a phase of the spiritual life described by Teresa similar to St John's dark night which she calls the 'Pain of God' or the 'Wound of Love'. There is an acute awareness of separation from God combined with an ever greater love and yearning for him, producing desolation and inner anguish; a bitter-sweet pain of insatiable love. Teresa speaks of a grief that reaches to the depths of our being and seems to tear the soul to pieces and 'grind it to powder' (T p. 57). Like St John's night, this is a time of purification through suffering. Again like St John and many other mystics, Teresa speaks of this experience in terms of a burning inner fire which refines and purifies the self and says that the soul, through its suffering, is refined like gold in the crucible.[15]

I have just been wondering if my God could be described as the fire in a lighted brazier, from which some spark will fly out and touch the soul in such a way that it will be able to feel the burning heat of the fire…Although occasionally this experience lasts for a certain length of time, it goes and comes again; it is, in short, never permanent and for that reason it never completely enkindles the soul [i.e. so as to 'burn it up' altogether and unite it fully to God]; for, just as the soul is about to become enkindled, the spark dies and leaves the soul yearning once again to suffer that loving pain… (T p. 77)

Teresa also speaks of the heart being pierced by a fiery arrow or spear. She had, in particular, one intense vision of an angel with his face all aflame, reminiscent of St John's seraph with the burning brand:

In his hands I saw a long golden spear and at the end of the iron tip I seemed to see a point of fire. With this he seemed to pierce my heart several times so that it penetrated to my entrails. When he drew it out I thought he was drawing them out with it and he left me completely afire with a great love for God.[16]

Because of this vision Teresa is often depicted in ecstasy with an angel piercing her heart with an arrow or spear, as for example in Vernini's sculpture 'Ecstasy of St Teresa'. She says; '…the soul has been wounded with love for the spouse' (T p. 69); it is '…conscious of having been most delectably wounded…it is certain that this is a precious experience and it would be glad if it were never to be healed of that wound. It complains to its spouse with words of love and even cries out aloud, being unable to help itself, for it realizes that He is present but will not manifest Himself in such a way as to allow it to enjoy Him, and this is a great grief, though a sweet and delectable one…' (T p. 76): note here the dual emotive tone of both agony and ecstasy. Teresa says that this distress '…seems to penetrate [the soul's] very bowels; and…when He that has wounded it draws out the arrow, the bowels seem to come with it, so deeply does it feel this love (T p. 77).' The arrow of fire '…makes a deep wound, not, I think, in any region where physical pain can be felt, but in the soul's most intimate depths. It passes as quickly as a flash of lightning and leaves everything in our nature that is earthly reduced to powder' (T p. 124).

It is of this phase of the spiritual life that Teresa says that the mystic is like a person suspended aloft, unable to come down and rest on earth or to ascend to heaven. She elsewhere elaborates on this experience of living between two worlds and its accompanying sense of being unable to find repose in either one. She uses the analogy of a silkworm turning into a butterfly to describe the spiritual death to the old self, with its attachment to earthly things and to self-will, and the emergence of the transformed soul. But the butterly, once it has emerged from its cocoon, 'knows not where to settle and make its abode…everything it sees on earth leaves it dissatisfied' (T p. 55). Earthly comforts are no consolation; indeed, they only increase the soul's torment. Yet no comfort can be obtained, either, from prayer or the interior life of the soul in God, for 'All that (the soul) can do for God seems to it slight by comparison with its desires' (T p. 55). 'Everything wearies it…it can find no true rest in the creatures…as this little butterfly feels a stranger to things of the earth, it should be seeking a new resting place. But where will the poor little creature go?' (T p. 56) The mystic is now 'conscious of a strange solitude since there is not a creature on the whole earth who can be a companion to her…' (T p. 125); other people, and all earthly things, seem 'like shadows' (T p. 127).

Teresa says that this state involves peril of actual physical death (T p. 125), but whether we are to believe this or not, it is certain that the intensity of the spiritual death to the limited self undergone by the mystic can be such as to make one feel that one is near physical death. The soul at this time also has longings for actual death, because it is so anxious to attain complete union with God, and yet it knows that this can never be achieved in this world (T p. 97). Although Teresa does speak of unitive experiences which the mystic may briefly enjoy where the divine realm seems to unite with the material world in the mystic's consciousness of God, she also holds, like St John, that we cannot fully know God in this life, and contantly constrasts God's glory with our own wretchedness and sin. It is not possible to be in a continual state of absorption in God in this life (T p. 31); '…we must bear crosses in one way or another for as long as we live. And if anyone told me that after reaching this state [of union] he had enjoyed continual rest and joy, I should say that he had not reached it at all…' (T p. 56) '… though angelic spirits, freed from everything corporeal, may remain permanently enkindled in love, this is not possible for those of us who live in this mortal body' (T p. 104). For Teresa, perhaps, the pain of separation from God and the resultant longing for him are necessary if our love is to be entirely selfless and full of humility; for the experience of 'love-in-separation' makes us realize that we can do nothing without God.[17]

This sense of unworthiness and helplesness of the embodied soul is also emphasized by the *bhakti* poets. The religious position of the various *bhakti* movements which arose in India from the sixth century onwards emphasizes separation between the devotee and the Deity, in contrast to the Advaitic model. In *bhakti* the human soul is seen as unable fully to understand the Divine and the vision of the Divine in this earthly life is necessarily incomplete. There is therefore a strong accent on love, devotion, ecstasy, adoration and on the grace of the personal Deity. The mystic throws himself or herself into a passionate relationship, surrendering to and putting all trust in the Deity.

A favourite image of the *bhakti* poets is that of love-in-separation, with wide employment being made of romantic and sexual metaphors. The *bhakti* mystics rejected the outward forms and ossified rituals of the Brāhmanism of their time, emphasizing instead inner purity, devotion and personal religious experience. They also rejected the class/caste system, holding that the path of devotion was available to all regardless of social background. The emphasis on spontaneous, immediate experience, the rejection of accepted cultural and religious standards, the repudiation of property, marriage, the institution of family and regard for social position shown by many of the *bhakti* poets are all cited by Turner as characteristics typical of those in a state of liminality. Indeed, Ramanujan adopts some of Turner's terminology in his analysis of the Vīraśaivas, noting that whereas the 'religious establishment' attempts to render the universe predictable and

safe, for the Vīraśaiva poets the religious life is an 'unmediated vision', unpredictable, unconditional, and therefore an example of 'anti-structure' according to Turner's typology.[18]

Just as the *bhakti* mystics repudiated the implications of the class/caste system, so St Teresa, in setting up her Order (the Discalced Carmelites) upheld absence of hierarchical status, which Turner finds to be a further characteristic of liminality, as her ideal: she had no time for the concern with pride in one's lineage and 'purity of blood' (*limpieza de sangre*) which had reached obsessive proportions in the Spain of her time. The futilities of worldly 'honour' (*fama*) and the niceties of social etiquette and respectability must be sublimated by followers of her rule into a concern for true spiritual worth and equality of all before God.

Before proceeding with our discussion of the *bhakti* mystics we should note that our own tendency to see the universe in terms of two worlds is specific to our own culture, being based on the dualism of the Cartesian, Christian and Platonic schemes, and this pattern does not usually correspond to that of traditional Indian cosmology which speaks sometimes of three, sometimes of seven, sometimes of other numbers of worlds, depending on context. But for the purpose of the present discussion it seems to me permissible to continue to speak of 'this world' and the 'other world' as an heuristic device, for we find that the *bhakti* poets frequently give expression to the conflict of being caught between two basic modes of being, this world (***saṁsāra***) and the other world of spiritual liberation and union with the Deity. (Cf. BU 4, 3, 9: 'This "person" has two states [of consciousness], that of this world and that of the other world.')[19] For example, Mahādevī, a member of the Vīraśaiva or **Liṅgāyata** *bhakti* movement which arose in the tenth century and whose devotees have left us a collection of lyrical poems (*vacanas*) describing their devotion to Śiva, exclaims:

> Husband inside,
> lover outside.
> I can't manage them both.
>
> This world
> and that other
> cannot manage them both. (SŚ p. 127)

It is said that Mahādevī was married against her will. Her poems are certainly full of reference to the contrasts between human and divine love. From her childhood her only love was for Śiva as Cennamallik-ārjuna, 'my Lord white as jasmine', whom she represents in her poems sometimes as her illicit lover and sometimes as her only true husband. In another poem she says that she has fallen in love with the Beautiful One who knows no

decay nor death, who has no form nor features and uncompromisingly exhorts that all worldly husbands who are subject to death and decay should be thrown to the kitchen fires! (SŚ p. 134)

At an early age Mahādevī severed her ties with the world of society and wandered as a homeless ascetic (a liminal state) in order to give her whole self to love of Śiva. Perhaps we can detect the disorientation of living at the interface between the worlds in the final lines of her next poem:

O mother I burned
in a flameless fire

O mother I suffered
a bloodless wound

mother I tossed
without a pleasure:

loving my lord white as jasmine
I wandered through unlikely worlds. (SŚ p. 121)

The 'flameless fire' and the 'bloodless wound' find a parallel in Teresa of Avila's purifying inner fire and fiery arrow or spear and, indeed, can be shown to be very widespread symbolic motifs of devotional mysticism closely connected with the pain of love-in-separation. Compare also the following verse by Mahādevī:

How can the unwounded
know the pain
of the wounded?

O lord white as jasmine
your love's blade stabbed
and broken in my flesh,

I writhe…(SŚ p. 138)

Mahādevī's love for Śiva is constantly expressed in romantic and sensual imagery:
Come to me, O my groom, auspicious-scented, gold-adorned and rich-clad.
Your coming would verily be the coming back of my life.
I am watching the roads, all athirst, hoping that Chenna Mallikārjuna will come.[20]
She also makes use of the theme of love-in-separation and 'lovesickness'.

Four parts of the day
I grieve for you.
Four parts of the night
I'm mad for you.
I lie lost
sick for you, night and day,
O lord white as jasmine…[21]

Another of the Vīraśaivas, Basavaṇṇa, who was both a statesman and a mystic and therefore truly lived in two worlds, expressed the conflict between them in a poem which draws on the traditional Hindu imagery of life in this world as a raging sea (*saṁsārasāgara*) :

a grindstone hung at the foot
a deadwood log hung at the neck

the one will not let me float
and the other will not let me sink

O time's true enemy
O lord of the meeting rivers

tide me over this life at sea…[22]

He implores Śiva:

Why why did you bring me to birth,
wretch in this world,
exile from the other? (SŚ p. 71)

and elsewhere accuses his God of 'taking away earth from under a man falling from the sky' (SŚ p. 62).

Bhakti, of course, was directed not only to Śiva but also to Viṣṇu, most commonly in the form of his *avatāra* Kṛṣṇa. Vaiṣṇava *bhakti* is eloquently expressed by Mīrā Bāī said to have been a Rājput princess and now a folk heroine. She lived in the sixteenth century and, like Mahādevī, rejected the values of the society in which she had been brought up to become a wandering ascetic. Again, her devotion is expressed in the sensual imagery of the 'mystical marriage':

Dwell in my eyes, O son of Nanda; enchanting is Your figure, dusky Your complexion, large are Your eyes. So beautiful looks the flute on Your

nectarlike lips…The belt of little bells round Your waist and the trinkets on Your arms look charming and tinkle sweetly.[23]

This blissful experience of Kṛṣṇa's beauty is sometimes referred to as *saṃśleṣa* in contrast to *viśleṣa*, the sorrow of separation from him. Like many of the passages in Mīrā Bāī's writings, the above is similar in tone and effect to the Song of Songs by which St John and St Teresa were so strongly influenced:

My beloved is all radiant and ruddy, distinguished among ten thousand.
His head is the finest gold; his locks are wavy, black as raven.
His eyes are like doves beside springs of water, bathed in milk, fitly set.
His cheeks are like beds of spices, yielding fragrance.
His lips are lilies, distilling liquid myrrh.
His arms are rounded gold, set with jewels. His body is ivory work, encrusted with sapphires. (5, 6–8)

Mīrā Bāī also speaks of love-in-separation and of the lovesickness or divine 'madness' (*dīvānī*) induced by the acute sense of Kṛṣṇa's absence.
O Friend, I am mad with love; none can know my anguish. Only he who has been wounded or he who dealt the blow understands the wounded…The bed of my Beloved is in heaven, what chance have I of meeting (him)? Smitten with pain, from forest to forest I roam. No physician have I found. Mīrā's pain will vanish only when the Beloved (God) Himself becomes the physician.[24]

Again we may compare the Song of Songs:

I sought him, but found him not; I called him, but he gave no answer.
The watchmen found me as they went about in the city; they beat me, they wounded me, they took away my mantle, those watchmen of the walls.
I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem, if you find my Beloved, that you tell him I am sick with love. (5, 6–8)

The dual emotive orientation of love-in-separation, the pain and the joy, are well expressed in Mīrā Bāī's next poem:

Not seeing you,
my eyes sting.
Since you left
I have no rest.

When I hear a sound
my heart trembles—
but that in itself
is sweet, lovely…[25]

The Song of Songs:

I slept, but my heart was awake.
Hark! my Beloved is knocking…(5, 2)

A number of close parallels of symbolism can be found between Mīrā Bāī's writings and those of St Teresa and St John. Mīrā Bāī speaks of the inner fire brought about by the pain of separation from the Deity[26] and, like St Teresa and St John, connects with the experience of this fire, the arrow of love which pierces the heart:

An arrow from the quiver of love
Has pierced my heart and driven me crazy…

Shyām shot an arrow
That has pierced me through.
The fire of longing

Is burning my heart
And my whole body is in torment.[27]

These same forms of expression and symbolism are also used by many other *bhakti* mystics.

Turner discusses his theory of liminality with regard to the Vaiṣṇava *bhakti* movement of Bengal, citing in this respect the work of Dimock who in turn offers some illuminating remarks on this movement, which of course is distinct from the *bhakti* poets discussed above, but closely related to them. For the Vaiṣṇavas true love is love-in-separation '…expressed in poetry of longing…with undertones suggesting the joy of union…Like Christianity orthodox Vaiṣṇavism posits a separation between man and God and expresess it in love poetry…' The pain of love-in-separation (*viraha*) is '…a saving grace which fixes the mind on God…man by his nature longs for union with God, though by the nature of the two actual union is impossible.'[28]

The Bengal Vaiṣṇava movement base their doctrines on the Bhāgavata Purāṇa which describes the life of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana in colourful folkloric detail and elaborates in particular on his dalliance with the *gopīs*. Vaiṣṇava theory divided women into two classes: *svakīyā* or *svīyā* (she who is one's

own) and *parakīyā* (she who is another's). In the BP the *gopīs* come into the latter category; while being married to other men, so intoxicated are they by their love for Kṛṣṇa that, setting aside social opinion, they care only for their tryst with him. This love-in-separation, which Turner calls 'both divine and faintly illicit', is contrasted with licit, marital love and, according to Vaiṣṇavas, is the only type that may really be called 'true love' in the context of the relationship between God and the soul. (It is informative to reflect here on Mahādevī's portrayal of Śiva as illicit lover and yet also as true, divine husband, and on her dwelling on the contrasts between human and divine love.) Marriage, Turner comments, represents in this scheme of things structure which is the opposite of liminality: personal possession or 'ownership' of the beloved is antithetical to the liminal state of love-in-separation.[29]

Eliade, perhaps thinking along similar lines, considers that the *parakīyā* type of relationship symbolizes 'the rupture that every genuine religious experience imposes'; by comparison, he says, 'the conjugal symbolism of Christian mysticism, in which Christ plays the part of the Bridegroom, does not sufficiently emphasize such abandonment of all social and moral values as mystical love implies.' I am not at all sure that this is fair on Christian mystics who, it seems to me, are by no means unaware of the tension between the implications of their experiences and accepted social norms and who, even when using the symbolism of the mystical marriage, seem to be fully aware of the 'rupture' of which Eliade speaks; and yet I think Eliade is nearer the heart of the matter in his suggestion that the *parakīyā* type of love is 'pure spontaneity', a love that exemplifies līlā.[30] The *svakīyā* type of love contains an element of desire for self-satisfaction; only the *parakīyā* type results in a selfless, spontaneous love which is for the sake of the Beloved alone. Dimock elaborates:

…the *parakīyā* condition of the *gopīs* made their love for Krishna more pure and real. For *svakīyā* leads to *kāma,* to desire for the satisfaction of the self; only *parakīyā* results in the *prema,* the intense desire for the satisfaction of the beloved, which is the characteristic, to be emulated by the *bhakta,* of the love of the *gopīs*. It is because the love of Krishna and the *gopīs* is *parakīyā* love that it is so intense. The pain of separation, possible only in *parakīyā,* and the resultant constant dwelling of the minds of the *gopīs* on Krishna, is their salvation…Their *viraha,* their pain of separation, draws their interest away from worldly concerns and leads to the meditation on Krishna which is the essence of *bhakti* and leads to attainment of him.[31]

Hence the *bhakta* may find joy even in the pain of separation if he or she cares only for the happiness of the Beloved and is able to be indifferent to contingent pains and pleasures, finding fulfillment in the all-consuming

love for Kṛṣṇa. The Christian mystics likewise exhort us to cultivate just these attitudes in our relationship to God.

In both the *bhakti* poets and the Carmelite mystics we find a tension, which often makes itself most poignantly felt, between the desire for the ultimate unitive experience and the desire to continue to experience the bitter-sweetness of love-in-separation. It has often been said that the mysticism of love presupposes a degree of duality: that is, that mutual love between the Deity and the soul cannot be part of an experience where the mystic has become absolutely one with the Godhead or Absolute. As Dimock points out:

There could be no such love as this (namely the love between the soul and God) if lover and beloved were the same. Although the jīva is part of the Bhagavat…*jīva* and Bhagavat are not the same. There is a quantitative difference between the two. The *jīva* shares in the qualities of, yet is eternally distinct from, both the Bhagavat and other *jīvas*…Thus, when by *bhakti* the jīva gains release…he is 'near' the Bhagavat, in a perpetual attitude of worship of the Bhagavat; but he is not…the same.[32]

Dimock's statements would have to be reconsidered and quite possibly modified if they were to be applied to Śaiva *bhakti* which has always tended more towards a monistic interpretation of the final goal of the mystic while interestingly still retaining the typically bhaktic attitudes of ecstatic love and devotion and, indeed, of separation from the Deity in the earlier phases of experience.

Carman discusses what he calls this 'paradoxical dialectic of presence and absence' of God in *bhakti* and outlines the solutions of various Indian theologians to the epistemological and ontological questions raised by this typically bhaktic perception of the Divine as omnipresent and yet ever elusive, one with the devotee and yet separate from him or her; he concludes that this 'paradoxical dialectic' is one of a number of important similarities between *bhakti* and Western theistic mysticism.[33]

In *bhakti*, then, we often find a tension between the more traditional Hindu ideal of liberation from *saṁsāra* and, on the other hand, a desire to continue to experience in *saṁsāra* both the bliss and the agony of love-in-separation. In contrast to many forms of Hindu mysticism, therefore, the experience of the joy and pain of the mutual love between the jīva and Bhagavat in a state of duality, rather than liberation from *saṁsāra* with its accompanying unitive experience, has often come to be seen as the true mystical goal; although on other occasions these two goals may be seen as coexisting. But the fact that the experience of love-in-duality is a very important aspect of the types of mysticism I have discussed here should lead us to question (as I have in fact done elsewhere) the theories of earlier scholars such as Stace who asserts that the essence of all mysticism is the

apprehension of undifferentiated unity and who holds that even theistic mystics actually have this same experience, but interpret it in terms of their relationship to God; this theistic interpretation is held by Stace to be a concrete metaphor denoting an abstract state of undifferentiated awareness.[34]

Stace therefore implies that theistic mystics misinterpret or misunderstand their own experiences; his claim that theistic mystics are 'really' experiencing undifferentiated unity is simply a mirror image of the more commonly encountered theological claims that monistic mystics are 'really' experiencing union with God or that they should be experiencing union with God if their experiences were fully developed (the latter type of bias is seen, for example, in the works of Zaehner)

As I have argued elsewhere, it seems to me that the most satisfactory approach to a cross-cultural study of mysticism is one that recognizes the validity and worth of both monistic and theistic experiences and that sees the similarities and the points of divergence between the two without attempting to 'reduce' one of them to the other.[36]

This is not the place to elaborate on the many differences between monistic and theistic forms of mysticism, but it may perhaps be added by way of conclusion that in theistic mysticism 'this world' and the 'other world' cannot be fully equilibrated or united; whereas in some forms of non-theistic mysticism, while the dynamic play of polarities may take on an important role, the opposites (including 'this world' and the 'other world') are seen as complementary and indeed as ultimately one. The mystic then endeavours to realize this oneness within his or her own being. One essential distinction that must be drawn, then, in conclusion to this paper is that in theistic mysticism the opposites are antagonistic; in many forms of non-theistic mysticism they are equilibrating.

NOTES

1 St Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle,* London 1974, p. 125. For this and other quotations from Teresa's writings I have also consulted the Spanish text in *Santa Teresa de Jesús: Obras Completas,* eds. Efren de la Madre Dios & Otger Steggink (Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos), Madrid 1974.

2 Many of these other forms of mysticism are discussed in my doctoral thesis *A Study of Mysticism and its Forms of Expression,* Stirling 1983. See also my 'Unity in Diversity', *Scottish Journal of Religious Studies* vol. 3, no. 1 (1982).

3 Cf. Robert M.Gimello, 'Mysticism and Meditation', in *Mysticism and Philosophical Analysis,* ed. Steven T.Katz, London 1978; also Frederick J.Streng, 'Language and Mystical Awareness', ibid.

4 The work by St John often called *The Dark Night of the Soul* is in the original Spanish simply the *Dark Night*. He does not in fact refer to a 'dark night of the soul' as such, but to the Nights of Sense and Spirit. The Spanish text of St John's writings consulted by me can be found in *San Juan de la Cruz, Vida y Obras,* eds. Crisogono de Jesus, Matias del Niño Jesus & Lucinio Ruano (Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos), Madrid 1973.
5 St John's own commentary on 'The Spiritual Canticle' in R.J.H.Steuart, *The Mystical Doctrine of Saint John of the Cross,* London 1974, p. 153.
6 Victor W.Turner, *The Ritual Process,* London 1969, p. 107.
7 'The Spiritual Canticle', v. 1, in *The Collected Works of St John of the Cross,* tr. Kieran Kavanaugh & Otilio Rodriguez, London 1966. p. 410.
8 Ibid., vv. 6–9, Steuart.
9 St John's commentary, Steuart, p. 149.
10 Ibid., p. 154.
11 *The Dark Night,* II.vi.6, Kavanaugh & Rodriguez, p. 339.
12 Steuart, p. 116ff.
13 Ibid., p. 120.
14 Further on St John see my 'St John of the Cross and Mystical "Unknowing"', *Religious Studies* 22 (1986).
15 *Life,* XXX, in *The Complete Works of St Teresa of Jesus,* tr. E. Allison Peers, London 1946, I, pp. 199, 200, 203.
16 *Life,* in Peers, I, pp. 192–3.
17 T pp. 74, 115. Further on St Teresa see my 'St Teresa of Avila and Hekhalot Mysticism', *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* vol. 13, no. 3 (1984); published also in Spanish as 'Santa Teresa de Avila y la Mística Hekhalot', *Homenaje a Luis Morales Oliver* (Fundacion Universitaria Española), Madrid 1986.
18 A.K.Ramanujan, *Speaking of Śiva,* Harmondsworth 1978, pp. 29–35, 51.
19 R.C.Zaehner, *Hindu Scriptures,* London 1979.
20 Mahādevī in T.N.Sreekantaiya, 'Akka Mahādevī' in *Women Saints of East and West*, London 1972, p. 39.
21 Mahādevī in SŚ p. 124. Four parts of the day and night means in effect the whole of the day and night.
22 Basavaṇṇa, ibid. p. 80; see also Ramanujan's note to this poem, p. 189.
23 Mīrā Bāī in Lajwanti Madan, 'Mīrā Bāī', *Women Saints of East and West,* pp. 57. 'Son of Nanda' is the title of Kṛṣṇa.
24 Ibid. pp. 56–7.
25 Mīrā Bāī in *Songs of Kṛṣṇa,* tr. Deben Bhattacharya, New York 1978, p. 136,

26 *The Devotional Poems of Mīrābāī*, tr. A.J.Alston, Delhi 1980, p. 114.
27 Ibid. p. 49 and 97. Shyām is a name of Kṛṣṇa.
28 Edward C.Dimock, Jr., 'Doctrine and Practice among the Vaiṣṇavas of Bengal', *Krishna: Myths, Rites and Attitudes*, ed. Milton Singer, Chicago University Press 1966, p. 61–2.
29 Turner, op cit. p. 157–8.
30 Mircea Eliade, *Yoga, Immortality and Freedom*, Princeton University Press 1973, p. 265.
31 Dimock, op. cit. pp. 56–7.
32 Ibid. p. 48.
33 John B.Carman, 'Conceiving Hindu "Bhakti" as Theistic Mysticism' in *Mysticism and Religious Traditions*, ed. Steven T.Katz, Oxford University Press 1983.
34 W.T.Stace, *Mysticism and Philosophy*, London 1961.
35 R.C.Zaehner, *Mysticism Sacred and Profane*, Oxford University Press 1978.
36 See my 'Unity in Diversity' and also my doctoral thesis.

9
YOGA PHILOSOPHY AND JUNG

F.W.J.Humphries

We who have done some study of Yoga at University level will avoid the vulgar error of regarding Yoga as a sort of glorified physical exercise. We have learned Sanskrit, we can follow scholastic arguments, we know about Pataňjali Yoga, Buddhist Yoga, Jain Yoga and can learnedly explain the meaning of 'knowledge', 'karma', 'concentration' and so on. However, it is still difficult to take Yoga seriously as a guide to life. After all, it rests on the unprovable theory of reincarnation and its final aim, which appears to be the annihilation of the individual personality, is repugnant to our instincts. So we have every encouragement to treat Yoga as a purely intellectual construction—but in that case the rest of our nature will be frustrated. We can of course get emotional and moral uplift by going to those *gurus* and divine incarnations who offer instant enlightenment—but then we shall sacrifice our intelligence. So what do we do?

What I do is to invoke the name of Jung to resolve this conflict of opposites. Jung has many critics, but they give him the credit of having brought mythology out of the museums and showing how ancient mythological motifs continue to work in the minds of his modern Western patients.

A person who visits a psychoanalyst does not go as a student or spiritual seeker but as a neurotic. He lives in a shamefaced world of sin and incompetence. To stay where he is is wrong and evil, but if he tries to pull himself together, as his friends keep telling him, he may make matters worse. He simply does not know what to do. This uncomfortable, lonely state is very different from going to a University after doing well at school—but I suggest it is a more promising beginning if we want to make something out of Yoga.

Sin was a central preoccupation in the old Christian writers, but nowadays it is regarded as a morbid soul-searching and inverted egoism. People will tell you that in Hinduism there is no sin, only ignorance—even though YS II, 5 plainly says: '*avidyā* means taking what is impermanent, impure, painful and not-self for permanent, pure, happy and self.' Even the traditional Protestant Christian confesses his sin in only a general way: 'We have done

what we ought not to have done…' and it is left to the psychoanalyst first to reveal and then to straighten out each individual kink or 'knot of the heart', as the KaU puts it. But unless we start by admitting that there is an evil—due partly to personal sin and partly to human weakness—from which we need to be delivered, our intellectual effort to understand Yoga will be frustrated.

Here is another example where a purely intellectual approach may mislead us. We are told that subtle discernment is needed to understand the truth of Vedānta, i.e. that *brahman* is real and the world is an illusion. Now this statement obviously contradicts experience, but even if it was true one cannot see why any subtlety would be needed in understanding it, since it is a very short and simple sentence. The same applies to the exhortation to practise supreme detachment. Even if this was possible (and it is not, as Kṛṣṇa points out in the Bhagavad Gītā) it would be a very unsubtle procedure, being merely a mechanical, uniform replacement of action by inaction. As stated in YS I, 12 detachment must be combined with *abhyāsa*, practice or application, in eliminating the activities of the mind and thus achieving the objective of Yoga. The Yogi must be detached in one way and passionately intent in another way. But even this does not answer the really interesting question which is—when should the Yogi be detached and when not? This question is answered, not by reasoning from general principles, but by responding to each particular case with one's whole nature—rational, aesthetic, moral, conscious, instinctive—under guidance from a teacher, but ultimately through self-knowledge alone. Compare the difference between a doctor and a layman with a medicine-chest. The difficulty is not to get hold of medicine, but to know when to use it. Theoretical study must be combined with meticulous observation of each case of illness. Yoga and Buddhism traditionally compare the doctor's art with the way of salvation.

We need, therefore, to bring our whole nature to bear when doing Yoga, and the thing to be eliminated is not ignorance, but perversion, addiction, sin. Patañjali says that evil is caused by ***kleṣas*** (taints or afflictions) and ***saṁskāras***—'shapers' or predispositions (we who disbelieve in reincarnation would call them hereditary) which determine our conduct. It is only in the highest *samādhi* that we even become conscious of them, but in doing so we destroy them, and therefore this *samādhi* is called *nirbīja*, seedless, because it burns up the seeds of evil. We may compare the belief of Socrates that if we fully know what we are doing, we shall choose what is right. Compare also the method of psychoanalysis, whereby we are confronted with our ancient fears and repressions in the confidence that if we face them squarely in daylight, we shall see that they are infantile and reject them. It is also worth comparing the ***saṁskāras*** with Freud's doctrine of the *id*, that repository of chaotic instinctive drives which have to be lived with and controlled if civilization is to survive.

The *id* is unconscious and, on the whole, evil—certainly if left to itself—and in these two respects it is similar to the *saṁskāras*. In this paper I have been talking about non-rational obstacles to understanding Yoga, and it is interesting to digress for a moment on the change in emotional response to Freud. During this century, he was thought of as a libertine but is now regarded as an austere old patriarch with a low view of human nature. Again, his view that there are autonomous unconscious mental processes was regarded as dangerously mystical (he had to defend himself against nineteenth-century scientific materialists) whereas nowadays he seems rather drably mechanistic and reductionist. One person who helped to bring about this change of opinion was Freud's former disciple and subsequent opponent, Jung. One of the main points of difference was Jung's theory of the unconscious, as set out in his book *Symbols of Transformation* (1911–12).

Freud has three layers—conscious, that to which I am paying attention now, preconscious, that which I could attend to if I wanted to—e.g. my right kneecap or my bank balance—and repressed unconscious, that which conceals some disturbing experience and cannot be known directly although it continually makes its presence felt indirectly, e.g. in the form of irrational moods, or lapses of memory. To these Jung adds a fourth—the collective unconscious, the inherited dispositions or patterns of behaviour which have evolved throughout the history of the human race. The collective unconscious is incomparably vaster than the personal unconscious and could never be completely brought to light by analysis—furthermore, it includes unknown good as well as unknown evil. In language reminiscent of the Upaniṣads Jung declares that the inner world of the Self is as vast as the outer universe. A Catholic theologian wrote a book *God and the Unconscious* as if the two terms were equated. But the unconscious is also nothing but a pattern of instincts—what we are when we are being natural. The child or the primitive in undisturbed surroundings can live naturally in harmony with his deeper nature. On the other hand Jung's patients, victims of a changing technological society, are those whose consciousness has developed disproportionately and become separated from the rest of their nature. Their lives become dull and mechanical, punctuated by moods and uncontrollable feelings which may go over the borderline of sanity. Jung cures them by bringing together the conscious and unconscious halves. He does so by means of the 'symbol', a word which has a technical meaning in Jung, and denotes a figurative representation (story, picture or even dance) of an unknown truth about ourselves. In addition, the symbol has a fascinating power which can transform the patient. Jung writes so long and lovingly about his symbols that one might be excused for thinking that he is advocating irrationality, but no—the symbol is only a stage in understanding; as soon as its meaning has been fully grasped, the symbol becomes dead. Furthermore, consulting of the collective unconscious is not

to be recommended for everybody. As Jung writes in his commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower,* para.16:

It would be a great mistake to suppose that this is the path every neurotic must travel or that it is the solution at every stage of the neurotic problem. It is appropriate only in those cases where consciousness has reached an abnormal degree of development and has diverged too far from the unconscious. This is the *sine qua non* of the process. Nothing would be more wrong than to open this way to neurotics who are ill on account of an extreme predominance of the unconscious. For the same reason, this way of development has scarcely any meaning before the middle of life (normally between the ages of thirty-five and forty), and if entered upon too soon can be decidedly injurious.

When the message comes through from the unconscious it reverses our nature and attitudes, but we must retain our former values as well or risk insanity if we surrender uncritically to the unconscious promptings.

The misconception that Jung worships the unconscious is comparable with and corrective of the idea that the Yogi is an unswerving devotee of consciousness. I suppose the popular idea of a Jungian analysis is sitting comfortably in St John’s Wood, surrounded by Eastern *objets d’art,* talking to a cultured lady about a stream of significant phantasies. The Yogi on the other hand is a grim athlete who can concentrate on anything with any degree of intensity for any length of time. After all, is not consciousness (*caitanya*) another name for self? However, non-cognitive (*asaṁprajñāta*) samādhi is valued above cognitive, insight (*ṛtaṁbharā prajñā*) is rejected and the mind itself, after its task has been performed, dissolves into *prakṛti*. Note however that insight can be abandoned only by those who have attained it—i.e. by a small, highly conscious minority of mankind.

One of Jung’s most well-known contributions to psychology is the detailed working-out of the difference between introversion and extraversion. We have relations with objects (extraversion), but we also judge and value them (introversion). Both activities are necessary for life, but every individual is biased toward one or the other and so may be called an extravert or an introvert. A whole civilization may be similarly biased—Europeans are extravert whereas Indians are introvert. This does not mean that every Indian is a religious ascetic. As the KaU says, God pierced the sense apertures outwards, and therefore one looks outward and cannot see inward—it is only the sage seeking immortality who resolutely turns his gaze in the unnatural, inward direction. Even if this degree of introspection is rare, it is an accepted, authoritative ideal of behaviour, and this is what I mean by saying that India is introvert. Conversely we Westerners are not all extraverts, but we think we ought to be. In the 1960s when we were friendly towards Russia, it was common to read newspaper articles beginning: ‘Life is much better in the Soviet Union now. There are more goods in the shops…’ We were gently patronizing the Russians, those

Marxist materialists, for not being as thoroughgoing and successful in their materialism as we were.

But an extravert can never understand what an introvert is up to, and this is another psychological obstacle to understanding India. The British are particularly extravert—we do not talk about religion unless we are forced to, and then we tend to become sentimental. The most authoritative British accounts of Hinduism were by nineteenth-century Christians who felt in duty bound to understand the system before condemning it. Monier-Williams' *Indian Wisdom* is one example and another is *A Rational Refutation of the Hindu Philosophical Systems* by F.Hall which appeared in 1861. The book is full of useful quotations, in the original and in a clear translation, by Vijñānabhikṣu and other authorities, the style is attractive and even witty (a great contrast to most books on Indian mysticism), but the final judgement on Hinduism is completely negative. In our century we had Keith who is said to have disliked nearly every author he mentions in his *History of Sanskrit Literature* and who wrote about Indian philosophy in terms which made it difficult to understand how anybody could ever believe in it. These scholars were only following the tradition established by the English empiricist philosophers Locke, Berkeley and Hume, who abandoned causality and ended with a universe of separate sense data which can be compared only with that most extravert of systems, the Indian Nyāya.

In Germany, on the other other, the dominating tendency was introvert. Right from the beginning, Indian literature was welcomed in Germany by Goethe, Schlegel and Schopenhauer. Deussen, the greatest Western exponent of Vedānta (and who also produced the best translation of the YS) was a follower of Kant whom Jung picks out as the type of the introvert thinker. To this day, if we want to penetrate to the meaning of Hinduism, we are likely to see through German eyes, and no amount of field-work or collecting of manuscripts will make up for our incompatibility of temperament. If you doubt this, consider how you would resent it if your scholarly work was described as 'subjective'—and yet the subject of experience, the self, is what Indian thought is mainly about.

The self, in Jung, includes the ego and consciousness, but it also includes an unconscious part which will never become fully conscious. The unconscious part is truly ourselves, but it is potential, unrealized. When it is made real, it seems to come from within us and turn outside us at the same time. The unconscious self makes its presence known through symbols, such as a king or a square or a circle. The symbol may be a complete, finished geometrical figure, but it denotes a process—the union or 'integration' of the conscious and unconscious parts of the self—which is never complete. The two future partners are complete opposites—the vast, chaotic unconscious containing both good and evil, is to merge with the tiny but 'human' ego which is ultimately to take control but risks being submerged

by its monstrous other half. The process of unification is itself largely unconscious—it often happens naturally and even the analyst is reduced to watching it happen. Jung says (in the commentary on *The Secret of the Golden Flower,* para 18): 'Now and then it happened in my practice that a patient grew beyond himself because of unknown potentialities, and this became an experience of prime importance to me. In the meantime, I had learnt that all the greatest and most important problems of life are fundamentally insoluble…They can never be solved, but only outgrown.' The object of the whole process is 'individuation' whereby the child who trots along obediently with the herd develops into the adult with his own, independent standards of behaviour. This sounds like a recipe for anarchy, but Jung reassures us (*Psychological Types,* para 758): 'As the individual is not just a single, separate being, but by his very existence presupposes a collective relationship, it follows that the process of individuation must lead to more intense and broader collective relationship and not to isolation.' The process of individuation, though stormy at times, has a happy ending—or rather we should not say ending, since it is never complete. Jung says (ibid., para 789): 'In so far as the total personality…can be only in part conscious, the concept of the self is, in part, only *potentially* empirical and is to that extent a *postulate*…It is a *transcendental* concept.'

Between the Jungian self and the *puruṣa* of Yoga there are differences, but not quite those which appear at first sight. Jung devotes much attention to the unconscious whereas the *puruṣa* is pure consciousness—but as we have explained, the unconscious has to be assimilated and, in a sense, controlled by the ego, whereas in the highest stage of realizing the *puruṣa* the mind dissolves into *prakṛti*—a more drastic procedure than any contemplated in analytical psychology.

As the Yogi advances his intellect or *buddhi* becomes serene and luminous, but even so it is nothing compared with the absolute, immutable purity of the *puruṣa*. What a contrast to the boisterous, chaotic, amoral unconscious. On occasion, it will smash our notions of good, true, beautiful and decent. At puberty, for example, we learn that the organ which we hid in shame and used only for going to the lavatory is also intended for the expression of love, and this was how our father and mother used it. Even if we reconcile ourselves to the facts of sex—what about the earthquakes and floods, the senseless destruction of whole species? But the *ātman,* too, has its terrible side, as shown in the KaU (II, 15): 'He whose food is the brahmin and *kṣatriya* and whose condiment is death—who truly knows where he is?' 'Through fear of him fire burns, through fear the sun shines' (VI, 3). 'Mahat *bhayaṁ vajram udyatam*—a great fear, a raised thunderbolt' (VI, 2).

Many aspects of the unconscious, however, belong to *prakṛti*. Here again we may be misled at first sight. The unconscious contains everything, good and bad, whereas *prakṛti* is only to be suppressed and sloughed off—the

self should never have got mixed up with it in the first place. But *prakṛti* is for both *pravṛtti*, action, and *nivṛtti*, cessation; *bhoga*, experience, and *apavarga*, liberation. We must follow the law of our nature—our *guṇas* and *saṁskāras*—and first experience the world before seeking release from it. Similarly Jung says that in the first half of life we must go out into the world and adapt ourselves to society; it is only in the second half that we are encouraged to come to terms with our deeper self. *Prakṛti*, like the unconscious, has the power of serving and as it were educating the *puruṣa* . Its operation is inscrutable and beyond our understanding. Like the farmer in YS IV, 3 we cannot make the rice grow, we can only water the field and leave the creative powers of nature (*prakṛtayaḥ*) to do the rest. *Prakṛti* in its primal undifferentiated state (*pradhāna*) is an awesome mystery, described by Vyāsa (on YS 11, 19) as unmanifest, beyond existence and non-existence, outside the world of growth and decay.

Jung's theory of individuation has been criticized as egotistic, but he replies that the self, when it develops according to its own laws, ends by being more firmly rooted in society. Similarly the Self of Sāṅkhya Yoga is sometimes considered narrow compared with the universal *ātman-brahman*, and cold compared with a loving relation between soul and God. The English translation of *kaivalya* as 'isolation' does nothing to help matters. But the realized *puruṣa* has not defaulted in its obligations—it, or rather the *guṇas*, are *kṛtārtha*, they have done what needed to be done. What happens to the *puruṣa* after that is unknowable, but there is no reason to think that it is restricted or deprived.

The self is a transcendental concept. This is admitted even by Jung, the empirical observer. In Yoga transcendence is pushed so far that one wonders how the self can have any connection with the world. The self cannot act and, according to Vijñānabhikṣu, it cannot even perceive—it only reflects the state of the *buddhi*. It also cannot be perceived, and in this respect it is like the Jungian self. In philosophy, perception—e.g. perceiving a pot—is distinguished from apperception—my knowledge that I am perceiving a pot. Normally, apperception would be regarded as evidence of the self, but this is denied by Vijñābhikṣu on YS I, 4. The statement 'I am acting', 'I am happy', etc. qualifies the *buddhi*, not the *puruṣa*. The reason is that sometimes we are happy and sometimes unhappy whereas the *puruṣa* would have to be always happy since it is changeless. It is interesting that this same argument is used by Kant in discussing what he calls the 'synthetic unity of apperception' or the 'transcendental unity of self-consciousness'. Each representation or field of consciousness must have a unity which enables me to say 'I think', since otherwise there would be something unthinkable or some part of my experience which does not belong to me. But this unity is a necessary, permanent condition of experience. It is not the same as what Kant calls empirical or primitive

apperception—i.e. the fact that sometimes I notice that I am thinking whereas at other times I do not.

Individuation, as defined by Jung, ‘means separation and differentiation from the general and a building up of the particular—not a particularity that is *sought out,* but one that is already ingrained in the psychic constitution’ (*Psychological Types,* p. 449). This has a general resemblance to Patañjali’s system in that a predetermined self is purified from foreign influences, but there are important differences. The self evolves whereas *puruṣa* is changeless (though changelessness is difficult to reconcile with the educative function of *prakṛti*). Furthermore, the evolved self will be more firmly rooted in the world, whereas the aim of *puruṣa* is release from the world. Here we have two different orders of ideas. In the psychiatrist’s consulting room profound symbols may appear—the world serpent, the world clock, the subterranean pool into which one must plunge and be purified. But these symbols only show the way—they are not a substitute for spiritual regeneration. The patient may not take the plunge—he may walk out of the analysis instead. Even if he stays, his object is to be comfortable, not to reach a lonely spiritual eminence.

The question—What does the self do after being liberated, is it quiet or continually active?—is a metaphysical one, of the kind which the Buddha deplored. It cannot be answered by experience, but it can be approached by analogy. When we grow old, we go through the phase of ‘involution’—our organs contract and we lose interest in the world, even if we are healthy. In India, the traditional time for devoting oneself to spiritual things was after one’s working life had ended. There is an association between self-realization and death, as when Naciketas is taught by Yama. Furthermore in Indian mathematics there is no infinity but a largest number (cf. *Tarkasaṅgraha,* section 24 and YS I, 25 where the fact that there is a limit to omniscience is used by Vyāsa to prove that an omniscient being must exist). Since everything has a limit, it would follow that the possible experience of the *puruṣa* is also limited and must come to an end.

On the other hand a Christian would maintain that in heaven there is a permanent, active, loving relation between God and the community of saints with their resurrected bodies—an ideal society in which Jung’s perfectly evolved self would naturally fit. Can this be another example of the difference between introvert and extravert when they look at the same situation?

Finally we come to a less philosophical and more controversial feature of Jung’s later life—the ‘synchronicity’ or mystic correspondence between inner and outer events, and the ghosts, horoscopes and paranormal phenomena which have increased his following and turned him from a doctor into—well, into the wonder-working numinous figure of the kind which has always been associated with the word ‘Yogi’. Does Jung really

have extra powers, or is it only that people think he has? Instead of leaving the *siddhis* in the decent obscurity of the Sanskrit, we are seriously asking whether they can occur in modern Europe. Once again, Jung has brought mythology out of the museums.

10
THREE CONTEMPORARY INDIAN MYSTICS: ĀNANDAMAYĪ, KRISHNABAI AND RAJNEESH

John E.Mitchiner

INTRODUCTION

In this paper I shall attempt to give a general and reasonably representative view of the several paths followed by contemporary Indian mystics. Any selection of a single or a few present-day mystical thinkers of India will inevitably contain a considerable degree of subjective preference: and the present selection is no exception. My choice of these three individuals rests partly with the fact that they each exemplify a different mystical path: Ānandamayī is predominantly an Advaitin, who emphasizes above all the pursuit of *jňāna* or spiritual knowledge for the realization of *brahman;* Krishnabai tends more towards the pursuit of *bhakti* or loving devotion, directed in her case towards her *guru* Rāmdās as the personification of *brahman;* while Rajneesh adopts a highly syncretic approach—relying strongly upon active forms of meditation—which does not easily fit into any one of the traditional categories of Indian mysticism. My choice was also influenced by my having met each of these individuals, and having been able to hear and observe them at first hand: primarily between April and July 1978, and in the case of Rajneesh on several further occasions.

If it be accepted that mysticism centres primarily upon experience—and that the words in which the experiencer expresses that experience are secondary to the experience itself—it then becomes significant to learn not just what the experiencer says about his experience, but also how he says it, and how differently he expresses it to different audiences or on different occasions. Useful insights in this connection can therefore be gained by studying not just the written teachings but also the sayings and activities of mystics at first hand. In this paper I shall give, firstly, an outline account of the lives as well as the teachings of these three individuals—which will it is hoped be in any case of interest to those who may be unacquainted with any of them—before discussing certain more general points raised by this account.

Finally by way of introductory remarks, I must briefly explain my use of the term 'mystic' in this paper. Rather than enter upon a detailed discussion of objective criteria (if such exist) which might validate the claim to be a mystic, I shall here accept the claims of these three individuals to have experienced—or to live in awareness of—some form of union or identity with what they see as being the One ultimate reality of existence, whether this be called God, *brahman*, *nirvāṇa* or whatever. I shall accordingly not be concerned to attempt any evaluation of such claims, but simply to describe the teachings and experiences of these individuals, wherever possible in their own words.

ĀNANDAMAYĪ

Ānandamayī Mā—the Blissful Mother—was born on 30 April 1896 in the small village of Kheora in what is now the Tripura district of Bangladesh. She was the second of eight children: and was given the name Nirmalā Sundarī Bhaṭṭāchārya. Her parents were devout Vaiṣṇava brahmins and strict followers of caste regulations. They were also poor, since her father had no regular employment, and for that reason the only formal education which Nirmalā received amounted to less than two years in the local primary school—to the present day she writes little and never sees fit to read books. On the other hand she was greatly influenced and affected as a child by the music of *kīrtana* and by *japa* or the chanting of the names of God which—as she later claimed—used to induce trances and visions. In 1909, just before her thirteenth birthday, Nirmalā was married to Ramaṇi Mohan Chakravārtī—later called Bholānāth—who came from the district of Dacca: But for the first five years of their marriage her husband travelled throughout Bangladesh in search of work, while Nirmalā lived with her husband's sister-in-law Pramodā Devī. Even after she finally went to live with her husband in 1914, the marriage was never physically consumated, right up to her husband's death in 1936.

From 1914 onwards—and especially after 1918—Nirmalā devoted herself increasingly to *sādhanā* or spiritual disciplines of various sorts which included fasting and a three-year silence; there was no sudden event or single occurrence which marked a turning-point in her spiritual career, but merely a steady development from her childhood onwards. Her husband was understandably at first somewhat alarmed by her increasing concentration on spiritual pursuits, and being at one stage convinced that she must be mentally unbalanced, he summoned first exorcists and then a doctor. But when both were unable to treat her and instead assured him that she was not mad but 'God-intoxicated', he acquiesced and let matters take their course—and in time became one of her chief disciples. Eventually, in 1922 at the age of 26, Nirmalā initiated herself—proclaiming that guru, *śiṣya* and mantra (teacher-initiator, pupil-initiated, and sacred words of initiation)

were to her one and the same; and a few months later she also initiated her husband Bolānāth. Two years later they moved to Dacca, and as news about Nirmalā spread, disciples began to gather and sit at her feet and to attend her regular performance of *kīrtana* and *pūjā*. From 1926 onwards, Ānandamayī started to travel, first in Bengal and then throughout northern India: in 1932 she abandoned Dacca as her home, and ever since then she has led a life of travel and wandering, stopping only a few days or at most a few weeks in any one place before moving on again as the mood takes her. She maintains this wandering life to the present day, despite now suffering somewhat from ill-health. Her movements are quite unpredictable, and even her closest disciples can never know at which of her many ashrams she is to be found—whether at the main one at the Asi Ghat in Banaras or at such others as those in Vrindavan, Hardwar and Dehra Dun.

As her name indicates, Ānandamayī is considered by her followers to be an embodiment of bliss—a bliss which springs from her union with *brahman* and which is undisturbed by any physical or mental discomfort, which she regards as *līlā* or passing phases in the divine play of life, The twin themes of *līla* and *māyā* play an important part in her outlook and teachings: the changing physical world, with all its events and phenomena, is relatively unreal and false in the sense of being a changing mask which hides the underlying unitary reality or Oneness of existence. It is at the same time the manifestation and play of the Divine, where the Divine hides itself under a veil of change in order that it can again seek and find itself as the changeless. In her teaching—which is always verbal or practical and never written and related to particular needs of particular individuals—she lays greatest emphasis not only on correct knowledge but also on the performance of *sādhanā* of various forms—especially on *japa* or repetition of the names of God, and on *kīrtana* or singing the praises of God: these being in her view the most effective ways by which the Divine in man can realize its true nature as the Divine as well as being the two forms of *sādhanā* which she herself pursued most vigorously. Man's goal, in her view, is the realization of *brahman*—or rather the realization of himself as *brahman:* there exists no ultimate difference between God and man, only apparent differences which man in his ignorance believes to be real—all divine qualities already exist in man and he has only to dispel his own ignorance and illusion in order to realize his true nature as *brahman*. This realization does not, therefore, entail the transformation of the human into the Divine since the human has in essence been the Divine all along and does not change: divinity lies hidden in man by the veil of ignorance which, when drawn, enables man to realize his identity with and as the Divine—just as the waves of the sea are essentially identical with it, rising from it and going back to it. As she said to Paramahaṁsa Yogānanda when he visited her in Calcutta in 1936:

Before I came on this earth, Father, 'I was the same'. As a little girl, 'I was the same'. I grew into womanhood, but still 'I was the same'…ever afterwards, though the dance of creation changes around me in the hall of eternity, 'I shall be the same'.[1]

Ānandamayī's vision of man's ultimate goal is thoroughly non-dualistic: man *is* God, and there is no essential distinction or separation between them:

All is THAT, and where THAT is, there is no contradiction. The false as such must vanish. How can one speak of *advaita* and include individuals, the world?…Where exclusively Oneness is, how can there be room left for two?…Just consider: the Infinite is contained in the finite, and the finite in the Infinite: the Whole in the part and the part in the Whole…He who attains and that which is attained are one and the same…The One who is Eternal, the *ātman,* He Himself is the traveller on the path of immortality. He is all in all, He alone is.[2]

Everything beyond this statement is merely elaboration and commentary: it is the One who in *līlā* multiplies Himself and, as it were, plays hide-and-seek with Himself through the veil of *māyā*—and it is man's task to raise this veil of *māyā* and thereby find his true self as the One.

Ānandamayī is a firm believer in *karma* and in the power of destiny. She is also in several respects a traditionalist when it comes to matters of religious practice. She gives qualified approval to the practice of *safī* or the self-immolation of widows on the part of a widow who is completely steadfast in mind and body; and she encourages the performance of daily *pūjā* as being of great help for a *sādhaka*. She lays little stress on the performance of good deeds or on giving physical and material aid or service to others: emphasizing instead the need to destroy the ego as the root cause of all suffering, and teaching that physical suffering and poverty can be aids for purifying the self and realizing the One. She advocates *brahmacarya* or sexual continence for the young as a cure for what she sees as the normal and spiritual decay of the present age; she strongly sanctions arranged marriages and family life, but only for those who feel irresistibly compelled to that path—and even then she advocates the renunciation of sexual activity as early as possible, holding up as her ideal the lives of the Rishis in withdrawing from worldly activity and devoting themselves entirely to a life of renunciation, asceticism and spiritual practice. All foreigners at her Ashrams are treated as casteless and must eat and sleep separately from those in the Ashrams for fear of ritual contamination—a restriction which applies even to the Austrian-born devotee Ātmānanda who has now been with Ānandamayī for forty-four years. When questioned about it Ānandamayī related that she herself—by behaving unconventionally during her own *sādhanā*—had thereby alienated many orthodox Hindus: and so now, while she personally treats everyone alike irrespective of caste differences, she none the less abides by caste regulations in order not to alienate her orthodox devotees who are still living on a level of

consciousness where they have not yet transcended caste feelings. One may subjectively question the satisfactoriness of this reply: what is undeniable is that many in the close circle of Ānandamayī's devotees are clearly considered to be—and in some cases too clearly regard themselves as being—in a uniquely privileged position, despite her attempts to inculcate humility and the destruction of ego; while Ānandamayī herself has enjoyed and continues to enjoy the patronage and respect of many high-caste and socially prominent individuals—not least that of Kamala and Jawaharlal Nehru, and of Indira Gandhi.

In the case of Ānandamayī we can perhaps see the applicability of Agehanada Bharati's contention that mystical experience does not necessarily change the personality and behaviour of the mystic.[3] Ānandamayī claims to have had—and to live in awareness of—a mystical experience of the essential unity and oneness of all existence: she tries to encourage others to realize and experience this awareness, seeking to share it not just through verbal teachings but also through silence—which she deems the most effective expression of her experience, as a result of which her daily hour-long *darśans* are frequently totally silent events. On the other hand she still accepts and retains the basic ritual and social values which were taught to her as a child by her Brahmin parents: these, for her, are but manifestations of the *līlā*, and of the veil of *māyā*, which man must penetrate in order to perceive the Truth of himself—they are secondary to the mystical experience itself, and so it is of little ultimate importance whether one rejects or accepts them. The fact that Ānandamayī accepts them tells us more about the psychology and social background of Nirmalā Sundarī than about the mystical experience of Ānandamayī: yet by accepting them and encouraging their pursuit, one may say that Ānandamayī is implicitly tending to say that in order to gain the experience one must follow the path of Nirmalā Sundarī. It is true that she does admit to there being many paths which lead to the same goal, and that it matters little whether one calls the One God, Krishna, Christ, *brahman* or whatever. Yet she does not claim to teach all of these paths: and if one follows the point to its logical conclusion, Ānandamayī is essentially teaching a path not for mankind but for those who would mould themselves—or who are already moulded—in the stamp of Nirmalā Sundarī, and who are most attuned to attain mystical experience through following the path already trodden by Ānandamayī herself.

The point may be self-evident but is, I think, none the less worth stating here: namely that the mystical teacher, at least in Ānandamayī's case, is limited in his outlook and teaching by the nature of the path which he himself has followed in order to gain his experience. I shall again be referring to this point at a later stage in the paper.

KRISHNABAI

The life of Ānandamayī is in many respects similar to that of Krishnabai, the mystic to whom I turn next. Mātājī Krishnabai was born on 20 September 1903 in the village of Haliyal near Hubli in Karnataka, the second of six children. Her father died when she was eight years old, leaving the family in abject poverty: Krishnabai received schooling only from the ages of four to eight and thereafter devoted herself to helping her mother with household work. At the age of twelve she was married to Lakṣman Rao, whose father was a moderately wealthy schoolmaster and whose mother was an avid devotee of numerous deities and Svamis: and the next few years of Krishnabai's married life—which were spent largely in Bombay—were by all accounts a happy period which saw the births of two children, Ganesh and Nārāyan, in her sixteenth and eighteenth years. During this period her childhood religious devotion increased and when she was eighteen she was initiated by the Vaiṣṇava teacher Tammanna Shāstri of Hubli. When she was pregnant for the third time in 1923, she went to visit her own family, promising to return to her husband in Bombay within a month. But she postponed her return, and meanwhile her husband died after a brief illness. Krishnabai was distraught with grief, not only at his death, but also for not having been at his side when he died. She sought a premature delivery of her child, which died within a month of its birth, and thereafter she became increasingly detached from her relatives and from life around her.

On the anniversary of her husband's death she resolved to put an end to her own life and took a massive overdose of opium. She was only just saved from death by the speedy actions of her brother-in-law. Krishnabai's suicide attempt formed, as it were, the turning-point in her life: from then onwards she devoted herself increasingly to religious pursuits, particularly to the chanting of *mantras* which she would repeat many thousands of times daily; and her devotions were particularly encouraged by her mother-in-law Anasūyākka who persuaded and accompanied her to meet a number of religious teachers. Krishnabai was further initiated by the Śaiva Śrī Siddhāruddha Svami at Hubli and then by the Vaiṣṇava Śrī Chandekar Mahārāj at Nevas. Yet neither fully satisfied her needs and she came increasingly to believe that all *gurus,* and all verbal *mantras,* were essentially one and the same irrespective of overt sectarian differences and that they were merely different manifestations and play of a single true reality. In 1928, at the age of twenty-five, she visited the Ashram of Svami Rāmdās near Kasaragod in northern Kerala. Here her search ended and after one year spent in the company of Rāmdās he initiated her, giving her the Vaiṣṇava 'Rām' *mantra: 'om Śrī Rām jai Rām jai jai Rām';* and instructing her to look upon all beings and creatures in the world—including her own relatives—as manifestations of Rām. Krishnabai was by this time deeply devoted to Rāmdās as her *guru,* and now an

interesting development occurred: she found that whenever she thought of God as Rām, she felt that He was far away from her. But whenever she thought of God as Rāmdās, she felt His nearness; and after some time she came to look upon everyone and everything as none other than Rāmdās himself whom she affectionately called 'Papa' or father. In this way, within three years of her first meeting with Rāmdās, Krishnabai attained the realization, as she later expressed it, of oneness with her Papa and with the unitary transcendent truth underlying the universe. From that time onwards she remained with Rāmdās until his death in 1963, helping with the setting up and running of Ānanda Ashram at Kanhangad in northern Kerala, notably through the establishment of a school, a hospital and services for the poor; and above all propounding the goal of God-realization by the path of devotion and by practising universal love and service.

Unlike the case of Ānandamayī, who has a large and influential following and on whom there is a growing bibliography,[4] little has been written about Krishnabai. Her devotees come mainly from southern India, although there is also a small following of devotees from outside India; she does not travel a great deal or go out of her way to proselytize followers. Krishnabai has, however, dictated an autobiography in her native Konkani which was rendered into Kannada and then translated into English by Rāmdās just before his death.[5] It is a somewhat unusual autobiography set out rather in the style of the *Confessions* of St Augustine: it is addressed entirely to her Papa Rāmdās, and all the characters of her past life who appear in it are considered as merely manifestations of Papa as the supreme and universal Spirit, the changeless and infinite Soul of all. Her approach is predominantly devotional throughout—as for example when she talks about the path which brought her to her ultimate realization:

O infinite Papa! Verily, I am your own embodiment…O all-pervading Papa! In 1928 you awakened in me a strong urge to become one with your eternal being, and I came to you…O Papa, the Divine Mother! The moment I saw you, my heart was flooded with joy. The rare delight I then enjoyed was similar to that of a child when it meets its mother after a long separation. Papa, you are indeed compassion personified. Within only three years of this child's entry into your divine presence you enabled her to realize your static, changeless and infinite Being. Just as the feeling of 'I'-ness in me pervades all parts of my physical being from head to foot, and yet this 'I' is distinct from the body, so also I came to know that I am at once the universal consciousness and the transcendent truth.[6]

There is thus a very personal element in Krishnabai's outlook, even though it is otherwise closely similar in many further respects to that of Ānandamayī. The Supreme is manifested in creation as her Papa Rāmdās who is at once her *guru* and the supreme transcendent Creator and Sustainer of the universe; her past life is seen as the play of her Papa's *līlā*, drawing her ever closer to himself and to the truth of herself which is himself, and

while she experiences herself to be the entire universe while also transcending it, she none the less maintains an attitude of awed respect and loving worship towards her infinite Papa—the One who pervades and transcends all creation, her own origin, nature and goal:

O compassionate Papa! In the worlds you reside in entirety in all beings—even in the smallest particle. Likewise you dwell in me in all your perfection. Now grant me power to describe your magnificent glory manifest in me.[7]

Her Papa thus dwells within her, just as he also manifests himself outside her in her parents, her children, in all that she sees and does. And she is at the same time one with him which is her way of expressing the goal of God-realization. Papa is for her the symbol of God or *brahman*. Yet Krishnabai's vision is one not merely of identity and unity with her Papa, but also of wonderment and loving subservience; she is one who has gained her realization of Oneness primarily, as she expresses it, through the grace of her *guru;* one who, while sharing in his Being and Essence, can yet offer praise and homage to his universal compassion and transcendence.

RAJNEESH

Turning now to the third of these mystics, Rajneesh is probably the most enigmatic, and certainly the most controversial and self-contradictory, of the three; yet he is also in many ways the most stimulating and the most forceful one in terms of personality and persuasiveness.

Rajneesh Chandra Mohan was born at Kucchwada in Madhya Pradesh on 11 December 1931. His father, struggling to maintain a dwindling family business, moved the family around various parts during the boy's childhood; Rajneesh attended school in Gardarwara from 1944 to 1951, then graduated in Philosophy from Jabalpur University in 1955, and gained a Master's degree from Sagar University in 1957. He reputedly became enlightened in 1953 at the age of twenty-one, and during the subsequent period, in addition to his academic studies, he also took a job for one year as Assistant Editor of the *Navabhārat,* a local newspaper, besides developing a reputation as a voracious reader and a powerful debater. From 1957 to 1966 he taught Philosophy at the Sanskrit College in Raipur, Madhya Pradesh, and still found time to travel to various parts of India delivering lectures and gaining followers for his views. His teachings became increasingly pragmatic and experientially-based, and in 1966 he left the academic sphere to found an Ashram and to devote himself to teaching and to devising a variety of meditational practices which he propounded since 1974 till 1981 from his Ashram in Poona.[8]

It is difficult either to categorize or give any brief outline of Rajneesh's teachings. It is also somewhat unnecessary to do so, for he made it clear that he was generally expounding what he saw as the single mystical truth

realized by his predecessors—be they Lao Tzu, Confucius, the Buddha, Jesus or al-Ḥallāj . His uniqueness lies not so much in what he taught, but rather in the way he expounded, and in the synthesis he attempted to bring to diverse teachings. He did not concentrate, like Ānandamayī, on teaching a single path, but he claimed to be able to guide people on all paths to the underlying unity towards which all paths lead. Thus each month he discoursed on different paths, switching from the Sūfīs of Islām to Zen Buddhism, from teachings of Pythagoras and Jesus to Hindu Tantra, each time proclaiming the virtues of the path which he was just expounding. He emphasized throughout the need to go beyond all teachings, including his own words, in order to perceive and be aware of the true reality of oneself. Such an awareness is by definition not something that can be taught, but something which must arise from within oneself; and since the mental and psychic pattern of each individual is different, so each must accordingly follow a different path in order to achieve this self-awareness, this liberation and awakening to the reality of life. The central feature of the Rajneesh phenomenon was thus not so much the teachings as the man himself who emphasized that what he was saying was not as important as the experience behind the words which he was using:

I am not saying any new thing every day. The truth is very simple and it can be said in a few lines. But if you don't hear it, I have to tell it again and again. I go on talking to you so that one day I will be able to persuade you to listen to the silence that has happened to me. And those who have started understanding me, they are no more listening to my words—they are listening to my presence.[9]

Rajneesh appeared to be unconcerned with organized or institutionalized religion of any sort. His main concern was not to put forward a set of teachings or to preach a particular path to be followed; it was rather to destroy all dogmatic teachings and to induce others to realize themselves through experience of the present moment of reality. For this reason, far from being concerned about any seeming contradictions in the various teachings which he put forward, he actively sought to retain such contradictions:

I am not giving you dogmas. I give you only momentary flowers: whatsoever I say at the moment belongs to the moment. If I was creating a dogma here, then I would never contradict myself. You would be happy with that, because you would have something to cling to. My effort is not to impart knowledge to you: my effort is to awaken you. I can't allow you to cling to *any* statement—hence I contradict.[10]

His point being that while many teachers have expressed the reality of their experience in different ways, no experience can be realized or assessed through relying on their words and expressions, but only by experiencing for oneself.

Although Rajneesh did not teach any particular single path for his followers to pursue, he did devise a number of meditational practices, involving especially group-psychotherapy and free sexual self-expression—but not the use of drugs to which he is opposed,[11] the underlying aim being to break down the narrow barriers of selfhood and to make the individual more aware and perceptive of both himself and others. There are numerous dynamic meditations and Sūfī dances where the participants may sing, dance, shake, scream, whirl, or do whatever comes naturally; the main aims being to release pent-up tensions, to lose awareness of the self through movement and thereby to penetrate to the stillness deep within oneself. There are meditations involving humming, and concentrating the attention on flashing psychedelic lights; there are more traditional meditations such as *vipassanā;* and a large number of therapy groups which range from massage and hypnotherapy to encounter—the latter being a week-long group activity designed to explore the personality, to release subconscious fears and repressions which may be brought to light by other members of the group, and thence to drop all masks and defences, leaving behind the narrow consciousness of selfhood and growing into an awareness of the shared life-force of the present moment. Much of the intention underlying these meditations is to free oneself of the past and future: to concentrate on the reality of the present instant of experience and thence, by coming fully to terms with oneself, to go beyond one's self. The growth of love, and of loving attitude towards others, is consequently of central importance to many of these practices, and physical or sexual expression of this love is not only encouraged but frequently insisted upon within the meditational groups. In many respects, Rajneesh's overall emphasis is on a religion of love and compassion—love in the sense of dying to the ego in order to share the greater Reality beyond selfhood:

Love is a deep communion of two beings who are ready to be together this moment, not tomorrow: who are ready to forget all past and future. Love is a forgetfulness of the past and future and a remembrance of this moment, this throbbing moment, this alive moment. Love is the truth of the moment.[12]

Yet Rajneesh also emphasizes that love itself is not the goal, but merely a stage which must itself be ultimately superseded in order to reach the goal; like all of his meditations, love is a game to be played but not taken too seriously. He adopts a similar attitude towards life in general, and towards money in particular, seeing these, as one might say, as a form of *māyā* without any lasting value. Yet his attitude is one of acceptance, rather than of rejection: all is a game, of little ultimate importance, so why not play the

game—if you have money, enjoy it; if you do not have money, laugh and still enjoy it.

There are a number of prominent contradictions and inconsistencies about Rajneesh which particularly strike the observer. He claimed on the one hand to be no more than a guide, pointing the way to the goal and helping others to select the path which is most appropriate for them to follow. Yet he also adopted the traditional Hindu role of the *guru* as God, as the incarnation of the goal, who is consequently himself worthy of worship. He proclaimed that one must die to oneself, thereby growing into the divine; yet he also encouraged his followers to lose themselves in him and to merge in loving union with him—an idea which bears close similarity to the Sūfī concept of *fanā'* or self-obliteration in the teacher. He claimed that he possessed no self or ego, that what was called 'Rajneesh' was but a shell encasing an embodiment of Reality or God. Yet surrounding him was a high-powered personality cult wherein all his followers who had accepted *saṅnyās* or renunciant initiation were obliged to carry a prominently displayed photograph of himself. He claimed to be a master who was unaffected by his physical surroundings. Yet in order to gain admission to his discourses, let alone to a personal audience, it was necessary (in addition to paying a handsome fee) to pass the test of the 'sniffers' who turned away anyone with the slightest scent or smell. He proclaimed that all religions were ultimately the same and that one might as well follow one as another. Yet he insisted that his followers should adopt a new (usually Sanskrit) name, together with orange clothes and *mālā* or beads—the traditional garb of Hindu ascetics. He emphasized the need to replace knowledge by personal experience, yet he established his own University where it was possible to take a PhD in such diverse subjects as meditation, acupuncture and commune management. At times he treated all of these teachings and practices as but another type of game, not to be taken to heart. Yet it does make one question whether there was not still some very powerful element of ego involved somewhere in the Rajneesh phenomenon.

What Rajneesh said over the years is voluminous and was sold in very expensive books—which one may see as a further illustration of his point about playing with money. His was basically a call for a revolution in oneself and in one's way of life, a call to love and to find Reality or God not by rejecting life but by penetrating to its depth:

I have given you **Saṅnyās** to live in the world as totally as possible. Just by living totally in the world you will transcend it. Suddenly you will come to know that you are in the world but not of it. The old **Saṅnyās** said: escape, renounce. But I tell you that those who escape are not total, not whole—it is not for you. You must live life in its totality, live it as wholly as possible.[13]

This was also a call to reject dogma, ritual and tradition. Rajneesh was, not surprisingly, strongly opposed by traditionally-minded Hindus as well as by the Indian political establishment in the form of State and Central

Governments who resisted his applications to set up a further Ashram, whereupon he started to make strong criticisms of Indian politicians in general, and of Morarji Desai, the Prime Minister, in particular.[14]

Rajneesh often seemed to be casting himself in the role of a prophet crying in the wilderness, proclaiming himself as another Christ or Buddha and preaching the path of destruction of the ego and of man's realization and enjoyment of his own divinity. If one searches through Rajneesh's sayings trying to find a definition of mystical experience or of the nature of ultimate reality, little is forthcoming, for he is somewhat Buddhistic on this point. He usually showed concern to set people on the path, to take them to the cliff's edge, but it was for each individual to take the plunge into the unknown, to discover himself and his true identity and to express this discovery in his own way. Rajneesh affirms in a general sense that Reality is One, unitary, non-dual. Yet beyond such generalized affirmations he left it for each individual to experience *whatever* he finds through self-surrender and destruction of the ego, through falling into an abyss of nothingness. Above all he emphasized that he did not seek to communicate through words, but through a shared experience which allows the Divine to take the place of the human:

What I am trying to say to you is a kind of music that I have heard. It has not yet been heard verbally. It is in the sound of the running water. It is in the wind passing through the pine trees. It is in the songs of the birds. It is in the silence of darkness. It is in the dancing rays of the sun. It is all over the place! But it is music. And unless you are capable of understanding this music, you will not be able to understand me…When words start disappearing, something far deeper, more powerful, takes place—communion: the meeting of the master and the disciple, not as two minds but as two presences, merging into each other, melting into each other, being lost in each other.[15]…Don't come here to be supported in your ego and your expectations. Come here to die! If you love me, I am going to kill you. And when you are killed, one day you will have the opportunity to kill me. And that day is the greatest day: when the master and disciple are both killed. Then only that which is, is left. God is in the master, God is in the disciple. When the disciple and the master both have disappeared, only God is left…[16]

DISCUSSION

Having looked at certain aspects of the teachings and personalities of these three mystics, I shall now seek to isolate and highlight those points on which all three are agreed, and consider the question of where experience ends and interpretation begins.

In the first place, I would select three basic statements about the nature of mystical experience which are agreed upon by all three of them:

1. that the ultimate reality of existence is One—whether it be called the cosmic absolute, God, *nirvāṇa*, *brahman* or whatever; and that all that exists apart from this One is secondary to it;
2. that man's individualistic self, his ego, is of no real or lasting value and must be destroyed and overcome in order for man to realize his true reality and identity;
3. that man's true reality and identity is identical with the One ultimate reality of existence which is in some sense already present within him even before he realizes it.

Our three mystics clearly differ slightly on the question of the precise nature of this identity and still more on the question of the way in which man's ego is to be destroyed. How, then, should we satisfactorily harmonize or account for these differences—and do they in any sense influence the nature or validity of the experience itself?

In talking of the nature of mystical identity expressed by these mystics, we are again considering essentially R.C.Zaehner's supposed distinction between monistic and theistic approaches[17]—here typified respectively by, on the one hand, Ānandamayī's and Rajneesh's total identity versus, on the other hand, Krishnabai's *bhakti* approach envisioning her Papa as the reality within her which she can yet praise and wonder at. Are, then, these approaches 'distinct and mutally opposed' or is the latter approach, in Ninian Smart's terminology,[18] a 'high auto-interpretation read into', as it were, the experience itself?

Smart's basic contention is that 'phenomenologically mysticism is everywhere the same; different flavours, however, accrue to the experiences of mystics because of their ways of life and modes of auto-interpretation'.[19] Reading between the lines, what Smart seems in effect to be saying is that all mysticism is basically monistic, but is theistically interpreted by some due to their background or dogmatic presuppositions. According to this line of thought, therefore, we must say that the unitary monistic vision of Ānandamayī and Rajneesh is somehow closer to the truth than Krishnabai's *bhakti* approach, and closer also than all experiences expressed in theistic terms. I am somewhat inclined to agree with Smart on this point for the following reason: the *bhakti* approach necessitates an emotional response and attitude, which is at root an individually motivated response to a given situation that requires by definition the presence of some form of individual identity or ego; yet this is precisely what must be eradicated by the mystic in order to realize the fullness of his quest. We must, however, at the same time ask whether this attitude of wonderment and praise is itself an integral part of the experience, or a subsequent interpretation on the part of the experiencer; and I am inclined to suspect that the latter is most probably the case with Krishnabai who in places speaks of her experience in terms of total identity with her Papa—just as it is also the case with certain Christian

and Sūfī mystics. With the latter we can, for example, point out many instances wherein total unity and identity between man and God is spoken of, while apologists such as Ruysbroeck and al-Ghazālī argue hetero-interpretatively—in line with their dogmatic presuppositions—that such experiences of seeming unity with God are to be interpreted along the lines of only an apparent and non-absolute unity like that experienced between lovers in a state of drunkenness.[20] I would not go so far as Smart in drawing a clear distinction between mysticism and *bhakti* religion but would tend to suggest that the *bhakti* approach is in some measure an emotional, and consequently an individual and non-absolute, response to mystical experience. I would here agree more with Rajneesh, who while laying very strong emphasis on the path of love as a means for the dissolution of the ego, none the less also emphasizes that ultimately love itself must be superseded by something higher. The path of love can bring one close to the goal, but one must ultimately go beyond even that, and so the *bhakti* approach can lead one to the heights, yet its inherent element of emotionalism must be surpassed in order to attain the supreme identity.

I now turn to the question of the precise way in which man's ego is to be destroyed in order to realize the mystical goal. As I have attempted to indicate particularly in the case of Ānandamayī, the path adopted and taught by her is essentially that which she herself had earlier followed, dependent largely on her own upbringing and psychology. And I would suggest that much the same is also the case with both Krishnabai and Rajneesh, namely that the particular paths and practices which they advocate for their followers are based in large measure on those practices followed by and suited to themselves. All three mystics affirm that the paths do not lead automatically to the experience itself: and this in a sense confirms Smart's contention that the mystic's doctrine, as also his practices and methods, are determined at least partly by factors other than the mystical experience itself. Indeed, Rajneesh repeatedly proclaimed that he taught no doctrines or dogmas and that his aim was to denounce and go beyond all static doctrines to experiential knowledge. If we accept that, by definition, Rajneesh, as one claiming to have experience of union or identity with the One ultimate reality of existence, is a mystic, we may accordingly accept Smart's point that doctrine is extrinsic and non-essential to the mystical experience itself. The different individual practices and beliefs of these three mystics need not, therefore, deter us from believing that their experiences are not for that reason of the same order.

I would like to raise Agehananda Bharati's contention that mysticism has no connection with morality and that mystical experience in no way alters the personality or behaviour of the mystic.[21] This contention is, to my mind, untenable. It may well be the case with isolated mystical experiences where the experiencer does not encourage or desire a repetition of the experience or where he is content to treat the experience as an interesting

and enjoyable but not exceptionally significant part of his total human experience. Yet by all accounts mystical experience involves a sense of the loss of selfhood and of the merging of ‘oneself with some greater reality. Also, if any seriousness or value is attached to the experience, it follows that the mystic will thereafter strive for a greater loss of his own sense of selfhood—as is the central concern of these three Indian mystics, and indeed of mystics in all major traditions.

The mystic will consequently strive to adopt an attitude throughout his everyday life in which his sense of selfhood and his egotistic or self-seeking tendencies are reduced to a minimum and ultimately destroyed. And this attitude will inevitably be reflected in his behaviour and will indeed influence the form of behaviour adopted. Clearly, if a mystic was already striving to destroy his ego before his experience, his behaviour after that experience will not show any marked change, merely an intensification of the previous pattern, as would seem to be the case with Ānandamayī in particular. A blatant egotist, on the other hand, can only remain an egotist after a mystical experience if he rejects the central import of his experience and refuses to take it seriously. But if he seriously accepts its basic implications, he will thereafter strive to curb his egotistic tendencies. It is perhaps the twin factors of the unitive experience itself *plus also* the attempt to mould oneself upon the basic *dicta* of that experience which constitutes a mystic and it is questionable whether one who undergoes a mystical experience, yet remains unconcerned to give serious consideration to its basic unitive implication, should properly be called a mystic. This does not, of course, deny that mystical or unitive experiences may be enjoyed by a large number of people; but it does imply that the mystic is one who seriously accepts the implications of that experience as influencing his entire outlook and way of life—as has certainly been the case with the three mystics at present under discussion.

I would simply add by way of conclusion that the three contemporary Indian mystics I have been considering in this paper, with their diverse approaches and outlooks, are indicative of the fact that the serious pursuit of mysticism in both traditional and novel forms remains a living and potent factor in present-day India: one which ultimately derives its strength not from any dogmatic or institutional basis, but—as always—from first-hand living experience.

NOTES

1 Paramahaṁsa Yogānanda, *Autobiography of a Yogi,* New York 1946, pp. 457–8.

2 *Words of Śrī Ānandamayī Mā,* translated and compiled by Ātmānanda, pp. 113.

3 Agehanada Bharati, *The Light at the Centre,* Santa Barbara 1976 (repr. Delhi 1977), pp. 53ff, 87–111.
4 Among recent works see, for example, Alexander Lipski, *Life and Teaching of Śrī Ānandamayī Mā,* Delhi 1977, and the discussion in Sobharani Basu, *Modern Indian Mysticism,* Vanarasi 1974, vol. 2, pp. 562–606.
5 Mother Krishnabai, *Guru's Grace,* transl. by Svami Rāmdās, Anandashram 1964.
6 *Guru's Grace,* p. 1–4.
7 Ibid., p. 2.
8 This paper was written while Rajneesh was still in Poona. In June 1981 he suddenly left India and established his headquarters at 'Rajneeshpuram', Oregon, U.S.A., and for three years undertook a vow of silence. Following a split among his followers in mid-1985, he announced that he had never wanted to found a religion and that he now wanted his adherents to regard him as a friend rather than a guru, to burn all copies of his speeches and to abandon their orange robes and *mālā*. Towards the end of 1985, amidst Federal fraud investigation Rajneesh left the States with the intention of returning to the foothills of the Himalayas.
[Editor's note: An up-to-date account of practices, events and problems within the movement prior to its disintegration can be found in Bob Mullan (Dept. of Sociology, University of East Anglia), *Life as Laughter. Following Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh,* London 1983. For an insider's account of events leading to the disintegration of the movement and the aftermath see H.Milne, *Bhagwan. The God That Failed,* London 1986.]
9 'Awareness', *Rajneesh Foundation Newsletter,* vol. 5, no. 6, (16 March 1979).
10 'Zorba the Buddha', *Rajneesh Foundation Newsletter,* vol. 4, no. 10 (16 August 1978).
11 His attitude to drugs is well illustated in *LSD: A Shortcut to False Samādhi*, Bombay 1971.
12 *Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh Diary 1977,* Poona 1976, entry for 19 December.
13 *Rajneesh Foundation,* Poona 1976, p. 11. See also 'Neo-Saṅnyās; a Dehypnosis', *Rajneesh Foundation Newsletter,* vol. 5, no. 3, 1 February 1979; and *I am the Gate,* Poona 1975, pp. 37–62.
14 For example 'Dogs and Politicians not Allowed', *Rajneesh Foundation Newsletter,* vol. 4, no. 19, 1 October 1978.
15 'Zorba the Buddha', *Rajneesh Foundation Newsletter,* vol. 4, no. 16, 16 August 1978.
16 'Trust in the Master', *Rajneesh Foundation Newsletter,* vol. 5, no. 2, 16, 16 January 1979.

17 For example in R.C.Zaehner, *Mysticism Sacred and Profane*, Oxford 1957, pp. 153–207.
18 See especially his ‘Interpretation and Mystical Experience’, *Religious Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1 (1965), pp. 75–87.
19 Ibid., p. 87.
20 For example Jan van Ruiysbroek, *The Spiritual Espousals*, tr. Eric College, London 1952, pp. 166–73; al-Ghazālī, *Mishkat al-Anwār*, translit. text and trans. in Zaehner, op. cit., pp. 157–8 & 230–1.
21 *The Light at the Centre*, especially pp. 94–111.

11
YOGA, MYSTICISM AND A MODEL OF COMPARATIVE RELIGION

Andrew Rawlinson

Reading through the literature on Yoga and mysticism will quickly lead us to the realization of the ambiguity of these two terms as used by many authors. At times it seems that almost any account of human condition and endeavour can be fitted into them. In the context of Yoga it is expressed by the variety of Yogas: Hatha Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Karma Yoga, Rāja Yoga, Jňāna Yoga etc.

In the context of mysticism the ambiguity is underlined by the need felt by writers to characterize its facets as done in the introductory paper to this collection: direct experience of divine or ultimate reality; a theological or metaphysical doctrine; and a (mystical) path leading to a (mystical) goal. All expressions used here have an intrinsic ambiguity. So do references to the ultimate reality as being 'beyond the world of external objects'. The words 'world', 'external' and 'objects' are not self-explanatory and may harbour different meanings. Even the expression 'beyond' is not exempt from this ambiguity.

One way of dealing with this problem is to define one's terms very precisely and adhere strictly to their meanings thus defined. This is the move that most systematic schools of Yoga and some mystical doctrinal schools have adopted. Another method would be to accept the ambiguity of language terms as unavoidable and try to show how they are related. Such a method is, basically, comparative; it starts with a set of different positions as found in different systems and does not try to establish a single, possibly correct, position.

In this paper I will try to outline a model that is concerned with the fundamental variables of comparative religion. It will be seen that it is applicable also to Yoga and mysticism for the simple reason that they both are, at bottom, identical with religion, unless one would wish to define them in a particular way which would mean using the other method instead of the comparative one I have chosen.

When trying to understand the great traditions and teachings of the world one is struck, sooner or later, by the realization that opposites are true. Or, to put it another way, opposite truths apply to the human condition. We

have therefore no option open to us other than to come to terms with this ambivalence.

Assuming therefore that opposites have to be embraced I propose the following model (see Fig. 1)which is essentially simple, but has extremely rich ramifications. It starts with two pairs of polar concepts: ‘Hot’ and ‘Cool’; ‘Structured’ and ‘Unstructured’.

‘Hot’ is that which is other than oneself; that which has its own life. It is not something that one can have access to by right. It is powerful and breath-taking and is associated with revelation and grace. It is very similar to Otto’s ‘numinous’.

‘Cool’ is the very essence of oneself; one need not go to another to find it. Hence one *does* have access to it by right. It is quiet and still and is associated with self-realization.

The meaning of ‘Structured’ is that there is an inherent order in the cosmos and therefore in the human condition. There is something to be discovered and there is a way of discovering it. A map is required to find the destination.

By contrast, ‘Unstructured’ teachings say that there is no gap between the starting point and the finishing point. Method and goal are identical. We are not separate from what is, and so no map is required. Everything is available now and always has been.

Although these four statements of the human condition are all related, they also conflict with each other. But they are all true. Examples from the great traditions will be given later, but first we need to see that the two pairs can be combined (see Fig. 2).

These combinations can be shown more clearly by using four categories that refer to those aspects of the human condition which all teachings must deal with in some form or another. The four are: ONTOLOGY or that which is; COSMOLOGY or the nature of the universe; ANTHROPOLOGY or the nature of man; and SOTERIOLOGY or the nature of liberation (see Fig. 3).

Naturally, the types can overlap and I shall give some examples later. But now it is useful to summarize each of the four quarters of the model with some examples (taken from Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism, respectively) and some essential characteristics and images (see Fig. 4).

A few explanations may be needed. First, it is no accident that the characteristics on the structured side are more numerous than those on the unstructured side. Naturally, the unstructured cannot have a wealth of qualities since it obliterates the distinction between substance and accidents. Secondly, the characteristics of the ‘Hot Structured’ and the ‘Cool Structured’ exactly complement each other. Thus awareness is ‘cool’ and dispassionate, whereas initiatory knowledge is ‘hot’, something one is granted. Similarly, the ‘Hot Structured’ path is one requiring the exercise of will which allows the practitioner to break through the barriers that are in

his way in an ever-increasing series of leaps. This method requires the use of magic, which is simply the manipulation of the laws of the cosmos in the service of self-transformation. By contrast, the 'Cool Structured' path is very restrained. There is a task to be accomplished (just as in the 'Hot Structured' path—they are both structured, after all), but the method is ordered and gentle. The practitioner starts on page one of the manual, so to speak, and works his way through. Everything happens as it should in the fullness of time. At a certain point, magical powers appear, it is true, but they are incidental to the aim, which is balance and timing.

An instructive comparison between 'Hot' and 'Cool Structured' teachings can be found in Vedic and Confucian ritual. All ritual, by definition, is structured. But Vedic ritual, which is concerned with participation in the sacred world of the gods, is 'hot'; while Confucian ritual, which aims to establish a correct relationship with the cosmic principle, is 'cool'.

The four categories of Hot/Cool/Structured/Unstructured form themselves naturally into four sets of pairs. The pairs above the horizontal line are both 'hot' (but are also opposite, because one is structured and the other is unstructured). The inverse is true of the pairs below the line. Analogously, on the left of the vertical line we have the structured pairs (one 'hot', one 'cool'); and inversely on the right. By contrast, the opposite corners of the model have nothing in common. The magician ('Hot Structured') regards the hermit ('Cool Structured) as a stick-in-the-mud; the hermit sees the magician as a tearaway. Similarly, 'Leap!' ('Hot Structured) is the exact opposite of 'Let go!' ('Cool Unstructured'). The same is true of the other two corners; 'Submit!' and 'Work!' Notice, however, that 'Leap!' and 'Work!' have a (structured) element in common, just as 'Leap!' and 'Submit!' have (though this time it is the 'hot' element). Similarly for 'Submit!' and 'Let go!'

Another interesting set of comparisons that this model reveals is that of the idea of a teaching itself (see Fig. 5).

All these types have attractive and dispiriting aspects to them. The great attraction of the 'Cool Structured' teachings is that anyone can be a beginner—it is easy to start. The drawback is that it may take a very long time to get to the end—and there is no one to help you. Everyone has to work on himself.

The attraction of the 'Cool Unstructured' teachings is that the truth is simple; the drawback is that it is very elusive. Hence the practitioner (if that is the right word, since there cannot really be practice on an unstructured 'path') is constantly failing. But because truth is his by right, he can always try again in the very next moment. 'Hot Unstructured' teachings share this characteristic—one is always failing. But the solution to this failure is not, as with the 'Cool Unstructured' to be open; rather, it is simply to ask. (Though, naturally, being open and asking are related, because both are

unstructured ideals.) The reason why asking is the solution is that the central truth of ‘Hot Unstructured’ teachings is that love is freely given to all who request it.

Finally, the attraction of ‘Hot Structured’ teachings is that there is plenty of help. Most cosmologies of this kind have the idea that the entire universe is designed to aid the practitioner on the way—from the colour of the rose to the megacosmic designs of the archangels. The drawback is that the task is correspondingly awesome. The journey is very long and the demands are very great. This is not an adventure to be entered lightly.

It can be noticed that both the ‘cool’ teachings (structured and unstructured) are open whereas both the ‘hot’ teachings are in some sense withheld. This is because ‘cool’ teachings are regarded as man’s right—typical ‘cool’ ideal. By contrast, ‘hot’ teachings are a gift, not a right. We can also see from the model that unstructured teachings are completely and instantly available, while structured teachings have to be worked through (often on a huge timescale).

As said earlier, the four quarters of the model can easily combine. In fact, it is somewhat artificial to separate them. A few simple examples are shown in Fig. 6.

The first diagram represents the teaching that God creates the universe with all its dimensions, that he is responsible for it, and that its forms express his divine nature. The second can be summarized as follows: Everyone is God—now. The third in effect is saying: One’s own self, which is identical with truth, is surrounded by layers that must be penetrated. The fourth represents a variant of esotericism: Liberation is a great journey through the cosmos, which is contained within oneself (and one needs initiation to complete it).

Of course, one could apply the categories of Ontology, Cosmology, Anthropology and Soteriology to these overlaps and thereby be far more detailed in characterizing them. But I shall leave the reader to do it for himself.

The model can be used in a number of ways. For example Fig. 7 represents the teachings of the Bhagavad Gītā. The first one distributes the four Yogas to the appropriate sections of the model. The second one unites the four, so to speak. This explains why the Gītā has been the most influential text in Indian history: it contains all the essential aspects of a spiritual teaching. Or to put it another way, it appeals to all levels of the human condition.

(I have to admit that I have oversimplified the matter somewhat. I have not included the Sāṅkhya material that is found in the Gītā and Rāja Yoga is, strictly speaking, not a ‘Hot Structured’ teaching. The two diagrams should thus be as in Fig. 8. However, if we include the revelation of Kṛṣṇa’s *aiśvarya-rūpa* in ch. 11, which definitely is ‘Hot Structured’, the first pair of diagrams can be justified as genuine representations of the elements in the Gītā.)

A good test of a model is the range of phenomena that it can explain. This one is not limited to the great historical traditions but can be applied to very recent religious movements. Fig. 9 is, I think, reasonably accurate. The diagram shows, moreover, the similarities and differences between the four. Thus there is obvious sympathy between Subud and Gurdjieff (both are ‘hot’), though the former is primarily ‘Hot Unstructured’ with a secondary level of ‘Hot Structured’, and the latter is primarily ‘Hot Structured’ along with some ‘Cool Structured’ elements. But there is no sympathy at all between Subud and Transcendental Meditation. Similarly, Krishnamurti and Gurdjieff have nothing in common (since they occupy opposite corners of the model).

Two other areas offer excellent material for seeing how the model works. The first concerns the Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva Bhakti traditions which I have summarized, using an earlier version of this model, in another paper.[1] There I used the terms ‘Love’ and ‘Meditation’ instead of ‘Hot’ and ‘Cool’. Fig. 10 is a concentrated form of the model that I used in that paper.

This can be further concentrated as shown in Fig. 11.

All great devotional teachings, whatever their provenance, have some elements of these four types in them. This can give rise to subtle and complex teachings. However, the model shows that certain general principles always apply. ‘Hot’ Bhakti insists that God is the doer, while for ‘cool’ Bhakti the focus is one’s own nature (which is divine nature). Unstructured Bhakti always claims that the method and the goal are one (though for ‘Hot’ Unstructured Bhakti it is love or submission, whereas for ‘Cool’ Unstructured Bhakti it is wisdom). Structured Bhakti, on the other hand, accepts a natural distinction between them. One of the consequences of this difference between unstructured and structured Bhakti is that the latter tends to be eclectic (any method is acceptable as long as it leads to the goal), while the former never is (there is only one method, because there is only one goal). Hence only love (‘Hot’ Unstructured’) or wisdom (‘Cool’ Unstructured) will do.

The second example to which the model can be applied is Buddhism, and in particular Buddhology, as given in Fig. 12.

I hope I have shown that this model is genuinely comparative and that it can explain the relation between different truths at various levels. If I have been clear, it should be obvious that the terms ‘Yogi’ and ‘mystic’ can be put in any quarter of the model (see Fig. 13).

Different people may have their own preferences as to how to use these terms. In this article I have used the term Yogi in an exclusively ‘cool’ structured sense and I have not used the word ‘mystic’ at all. Yet I have

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1 ‘Love and Meditation in the Bhakti Tradition’, *The Sant Tradition of India,* ed. by K.Schomer & H.McLeod, Delhi 1986, pp. 53–8.

throughout been concerned with what might be called Yoga and mysticism. If the model works, this should be obvious. And other people should be able to apply the model in their own way—and thereby use both these terms in a variety of senses—without the rest of us getting lost. That is what a comparative model is designed to do.

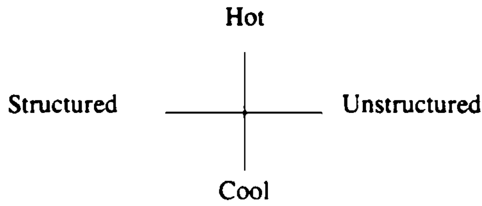


Fig. 1

Hot Structured	*Hot Unstructured*
The cosmos is vast and inhabited by innumerable powerful beings; liberation consists in finding one's way through the labyrinth with the appropriate passwords.	There is a divine power, quite other than oneself, which encloses us and is the source of liberation.
Cool Structured	*Cool Unstructured*
Liberation is within oneself, but it must be uncovered by disciplined practice.	One's own nature is liberation; everything else is illusion.

Fig. 2

Hot Structured	*Hot Unstructured*
ONTOLOGY: There are many powers/beings. COSMOLOGY: The world is a vast labyrinth. ANTHROPOLOGY: Man contains all powers; microcosm-macrocosm homology. SOTERIOLOGY: The great journey; the initiatic adventure.	ONTOLOGY: Only God is real; he is unknowable. COSMOLOGY: The universe is God's creation/projection/ manifestation; it is entirely dependent on him. ANTHROPOLOGY: Man is nothing before God. SOTERIOLOGY: Acceptance of God's will.
Cool Structured	***Cool Unstructured***
ONTOLOGY: Everything has its place; everything comes and goes. COSMOLOGY: The world is a harmonious whole. ANTHROPOLOGY: Man is the centre of the universe. SOTERIOLOGY: Clear awareness; non-entanglement.	ONTOLOGY: Only the Self is real; or: Nothing is real. COSMOLOGY: The world is an illusion. ANTHROPOLOGY: Man is identical with reality. SOTERIOLOGY: Know yourself!

Fig. 3

Hot Structured	*Hot Unstructured*
Examples: Gnosticism, Tantra, Vajrayāna Characteristics: knowledge (in the initiatory sense); hierarchical ___; will; expansion away from a point; hot magic (necessary and powerful) Images: magician, gambler; leap!	Examples: Pentecostalism, Caitanya, Pure Land Characteristics: bliss Images: lover, martyr; submit!
Cool Structured	*Cool Unstructured*
Examples: Philokalia, Patañjali, Theravāda Characteristics: awareness; gradual ___; effort; concentration on a point; cool magic (optional and peripheral) Images: Yogi; craftsman; work!	Examples: Eckhart, Advaita, Mahāmudra Characteristics: being Images: sage, hermit; let go!

Fig. 4

Hot Structured	*Hot Unstructured*
The teaching is never given all at once, but only when necessary and then only in cryptic form. This is typical of all forms of esotericism.	There is no teaching — only love and submission. E.g. Meher Baba: 'I come not to teach, but to awaken.' Subud is another example.
Cool Structured	*Cool Unstructured*
The teaching is open and complete but there is no point in reading p. 100 before you read p. 1. Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtras* are a good example.	The teaching is constantly given (the same truth over and over again) but no one understands it. Ramana of Arunachala, Taoism and Zen are examples.

Fig. 5

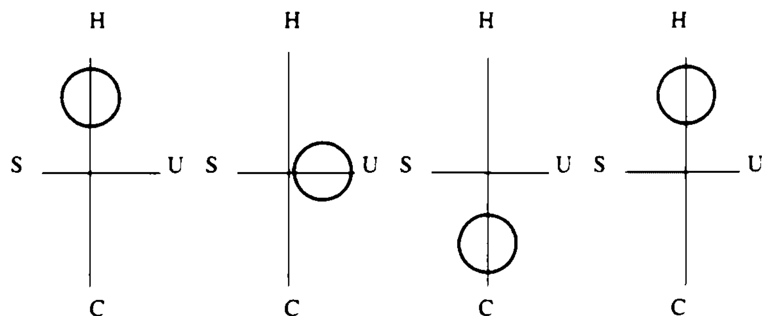


Fig. 6

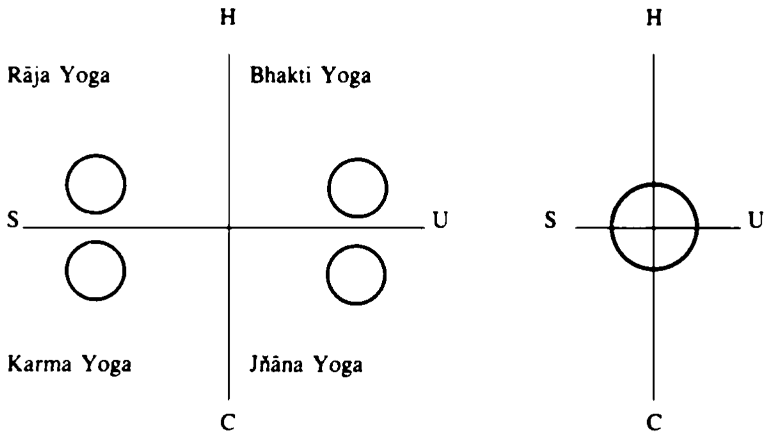

H
Rāja Yoga
Bhakti Yoga
S
U
Karma Yoga
Jñāna Yoga
C
H
S
U
C

Fig. 7

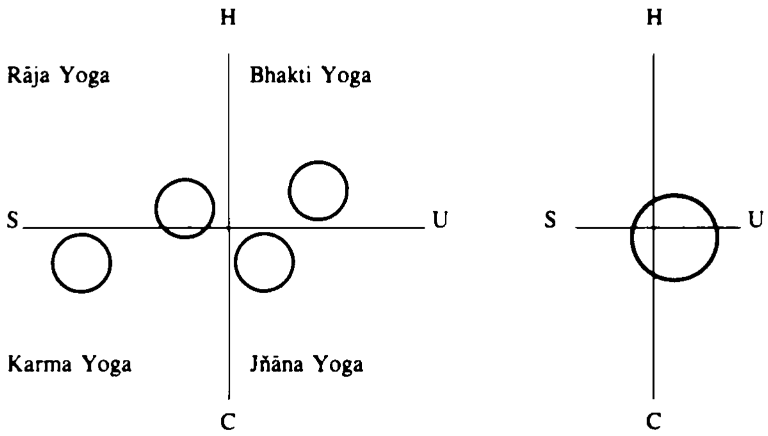

H
Rāja Yoga
Bhakti Yoga
S
U
Karma Yoga
Jñāna Yoga
C
H
S
U
C

Fig. 8

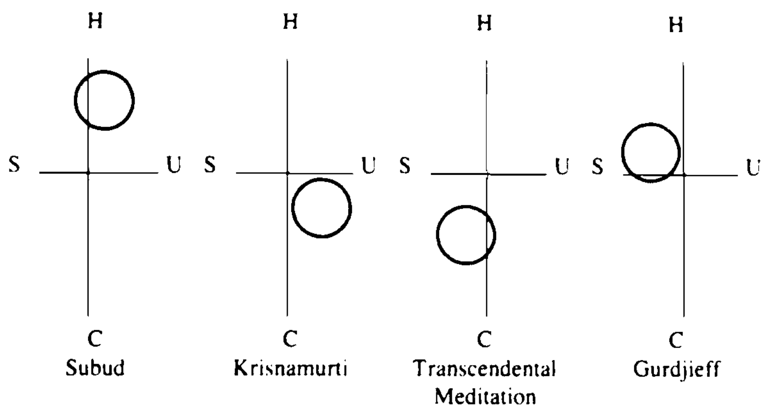

H
S
U
C
Subud
H
S
U
C
Krisnamurti
H
S
U
C
Transcendental
Meditation
H
S
U
C
Gurdjieff

Fig. 9

HOT

God as a person

STRUCTURED	UNSTRUCTURED
Separation, power The devotee obeys God God as King E.g. Ch. 11 of the Gītā, Mahākāla Śiva	Intimacy, bliss The devotee is lost in love God as Beloved E.g. Caitanya, Naṭarāja Śiva
Stress on relationship *Saguṇa Bhakti* Dependence, manifestation The devotee approaches God by disciplined practice God as Ordainer E.g. Rāmāṇuga, *Śiva-jñāna-bodha*	Stress on Union *Nirguṇa Bhakti* Merging, pure essence The devotee knows God (as not separate from himself) God as *paramārtha* E.g. Vallabha, Kashmir Śaivism (Abhinavagupta's Trika)

COOL

God as state of being

Fig. 10

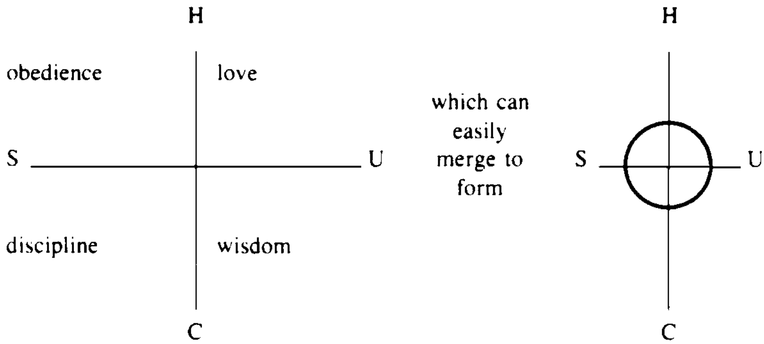

H
obedience
love
S
U
discipline
wisdom
C
which can
easily
merge to
form
H
S
U
C

Fig. 11

HOT

STRUCTURED	UNSTRUCTURED
ONTOLOGY: The one reality manifests itself in a dazzling array (*vyūha*) COSMOLOGY: *Saṁsāra* is inconceivably vast and contains innumerable surprises. ANTHROPOLOGY: Man can do anything — don't accept limitations. SOTERIOLOGY: Everything in *saṁsāra* is sacred; live as if it's true BUDDHOLOGY: The great magician: the manipulator of forms. Examples: Vajrayāna; Mahāyāna *sūtras* such as *Śūraṅgamasamādhi* and the *Gaṇḍavyūha*	ONTOLOGY: Everything is in the Buddha's hands. COSMOLOGY: The Buddha-fields are constantly purified by the Buddhas. ANTHROPOLOGY: We need help from the Buddha SOTERIOLOGY: And he'll give it if we ask for it. BUDDHOLOGY: The Compassionate One who grants liberation. Examples: Pure Land.
ONTOLOGY: *Saṁsāra* constantly changes. COSMOLOGY: *Saṁsāra* is a huge but ordered whole. ANTHROPOLOGY: Man is caught in *saṁsāra*. SOTERIOLOGY: He gets out by learning how *saṁsāra* operates. BUDDHOLOGY: The master craftsman; the great Yogi. Example: Theravāda.	ONTOLOGY: Only the Buddha-nature (*dharmakāya*) is real. COSMOLOGY: All multiplicity is illusory. ANTHROPOLOGY: We are Buddhas. SOTERIOLOGY: Just realize it. BUDDHOLOGY: The immutable essence of all. Examples: Mahāmudrā, Zen.

COOL

Fig. 12

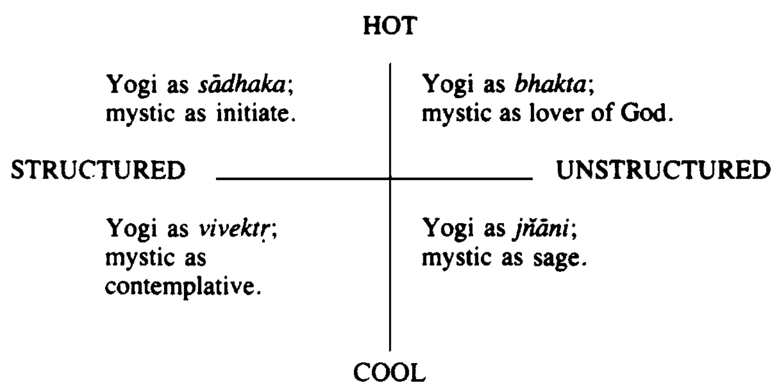

HOT
Yogi as *sādhaka*; mystic as initiate.
Yogi as *bhakta*; mystic as lover of God.
STRUCTURED
UNSTRUCTURED
Yogi as *vivektṛ*; mystic as contemplative.
Yogi as *jñāni*; mystic as sage.
COOL

Fig. 13

GLOSSARY

Abhidharma (Pāli: *abhidhamma*)—the 'higher doctrine' in Buddhism; the third division of the Buddhist canonical scriptures containing psychological and philosophical texts of predominantly analytical nature.

ādi—primeval, original.

advaita—non-dual.

akusala—unwholesome, non-meritorious, unskilful.

ānanda—bliss.

araha(n)t—the 'worthy one'; in early and Theravāda Buddhism a term for the accomplished follower of the Buddha who has reached the final *nirvāṇa* ; in Mahāyāna the status of *arahats* is ambiguous, sometimes recognized as the achievement of liberation, though inferior to the status of a *bodhisattva*, sometimes seen as a temporary respite with further effort needed if perfection is to be won.

Āryan—noble; also: holy or saintly as a designation for achievers of stages of sanctity in early Buddhism; derived from *ārya*, the name the Indo-European tribes, who invaded India in the second millennium B.C. and created the Vedic civilizion, used to refer to themselves and which was probably once so used by all or most Indo-European nations (cf. Iran and Eire).

aṣṭaṅga yoga—eightfold path of training in Patañjali's Yoga Sūtra.

ātman (Pāli: *atta*)—the self; the Upaniṣadic expression referring to the inmost essence of man, sometimes inappropriately translated as 'soul'.

avatāra—divine incarnation.

Bhagavat—the Lord.

bhakta—devotee pursuing the path of love for God.

bhakti—love, viz. of God for the devotee and of the devotee for God.

bhavaṅga—'subconsciousness', a term mentioned in Paṭṭhāna of the Theravāda Abhidhamma Piṭaka and explained in the commentary as a basis of existence of 'subconscious life-stream'.

bhūmi—platform, level, stage; stages on the *bodhisattva* path to perfection, ten in number.

bhūta—a being; a ghost.

bīja—seed; 'with seed(s)'.

bodhi—enlightenment.

bodhisattva (Pāli: *bodhisatta*)—an 'enlightenment-being'; in the Pāli Canon the term designates a being preparing himself for the career of a Buddha as the world teacher such as Siddhatha Gotama in his former lives and in his last one up to his enlightenment, or the future Buddha Metteya who,

as a virtually accomplished *bodhisatta*, awaits the suitable time for his last birth on earth in Tuṣita heaven; by implication there must be other *bodhisattas*, not named in the Pāli sources, preparing for the Buddha career in future world periods; in Mahāyāna the term *bodhisattva* acquires new meanings, one of them being based on the promise of the one who embarks on the Bodhisattva path not to enter *nirvāṇa* until he has assisted all other beings, 'down to the last blade of grass', to reach liberation; one can thus assume the existence of a category of permanent *bodhisattvas*.

Brahma—the god creator in Hinduism; in early Buddhism Brahmas are a cateogry of divine beings above the *deva* world.

brahmacarya—'divine faring'; living in a discipline for the sake of the realization of the ultimate goal; in some systems narrowed down to the meaning of 'celibacy'.

brahman—the divine source of the universe in the Upaniṣads; the sole reality in Advaita Vedānta.

brāhmaṇa, brahmin—priest, member of the highest caste in the Hindu social system; Brāhmaṇas are also 'priestly books', a category of Vedic scriptures.

Buddha—the Enlightened One; the Awakened One.

buddhi—higher mind; intelligence; the first cosmic evolute of *prakṛti* in the Sāṅkhya system.

ceta—mind; consciousness; will.

citta, *cit* (Ved. *kit*)—mind, heart; sometimes to be understood as the character or 'personality' of a being.

deva—god; *devatā*—deity; *devaputra*—son of god; sometimes these three expressions are used interchangably, meaning 'divine being'.

dharma (Pāli: *dhamma*)—reality, truth, law, duty; teaching of reality; in Buddhism: the teaching of the Buddha; also, particularly when used in plural: elements of reality, phenomena, mind-objects.

dharmakāya—'the body of truth' or the absolute reality in itself in Mahāyāna Buddhism.

dhyāna (Pāli: *jhāna*)—meditative absorption.

duḥkha (Pāli: *dukkha*)—suffering, unsatisfactoriness.

epistemology—philosophical discipline concerned with the theory of knowledge.

gnosis—knowledge; direct knowledge, often used in the sense of suprasensory and suprarational perception and understanding.

gopī—milkmaid, cowherdess; designation for the soul engrossed in the love for God in Kṛṣṇa mysticism.

guṇa—attribute, quality, natural force; in Sāṅkhya philosophy there are three *guṇas* or forces of *prakṛti* : *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (drive, energy) and *tamas* (inertia).

guru—teacher, spiritual preceptor.

Hades—underworld, the abode of the deceased ones in ancient Greek religion and mythology.

Hīnayāna—small vehicle; an expression coined by early Mahāyāna *sūtras*, propagating the *bodhisattva* path, for the early Buddhist doctrine with its individual goal of reaching *nirvāṇa* by becoming an *arahat.*

janma—birth; *janma-duḥkha*—birth suffering; the anguish experienced when being born.

japa—repetition; 'murmuring meditation'; inward recitation of *mantras.*

jhāna—see *dhyāna*.

jīva—individual soul.

jñāna—knowledge.

kaivalya—'aloneness'; complete autonomy from empirical states of existence as the realization of final freedom of the *puruṣa* in the Sāṅkhya system; also used in the context of classical Yoga.

kāma—desire, love, lust.

kammaṭṭhāna—a meditational object in Theravāda practice.

karma (Pāli: *kamma*)—action, deed; the law of cause and effect in the sphere of morality operating through successive lives.

kasiṇa—a circular object for visual meditation in Theravāda practice.

keśin—the 'longhaired one'; the accomplished sage outside the mainstream of the Vedic tradition referred to in RV and AV.

khandha—mass, heap, aggregate; one of the five sets of constituents forming the personality according to early Buddhist doctrine.

kīrtan(a) —'singing the praises of God', usually in a devotional gathering.

kusala—wholesome, meritorious, skilful.

līlā—play; divine play as motive for creation of the world.

Liṅgāyata—a Śivaistic sectarian movement in Southern India.

Mādhyamaka (Mādhyamika)—a school of Mahāyāna philosophy derived from the work of Nāgārjuna, its core being the teaching on emptiness and therefore it is also called Śūnyavāda.

Mahāsaṅghika—a sectarian Buddhist movement presumably originated from a schism at the third Buddhist Congress over the definition of arahatship and some other points of doctrine and discipline; it contributed substantially to the appearance of Mahāyāna and anticipated some of the Mahāyāna teachings.

Mahāyāna—the 'great vehicle'; the name for the 'second turning of the wheel' or the renewal of the Buddhist teaching on the basis of new *sūtras* presumably uttered by the Buddha on higher planes; it replaced the *arahat* ideal of the early Buddhism with the *bodhisattva* commitment to work for the attainment of liberation of all sentient beings; in time it developed hierarchies of cosmic Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, a doctrine of three layers of reality (see *trikāya*), several schools of philosophy and elaborate systems of practice, both ritual and meditational.

mālā—garland; a string of beads ('rosary') used during recitation or inner repetition of *mantras* to count them.

mantra—a word or phrase used for chanting, inner repetition, in rituals and as a vehicle for meditation.

Māra—death personified as the lord of death or the ruler of the realm of death, i.e. *saṁsāra*, prominent particularly in Pāli Buddhism.

māyā—illusion; magic; an expression used in Vedāntic philosophy and some Hindu sectarian teachings for the manifested reality as a product of the cosmic illusion brought about by the ignorance of beings; the creative or magic power of God, usually represented by his female consort, responsible for the manifestation of the universe.

metempsychosis—transmigration; reincarnation.

mokṣa—liberation.

nāga—a mythological category of beings related to serpents whose shape they often take; they can also appear in human form and their abode is at the bottom of lakes and rivers.

nāma—name; mentality; *nāma-rūpa* designates the psycho-physical compound forming the human personality.

nidāna—link, cause, source; a link in the chain of dependent origination.

nimitta—sign; a mental image indicating an advanced state of concentration or meditation.

nirbīja—seedless.

nirvāṇa (Pāli: *nibbāna*)—'going out', 'blowing out'; extinction of passions or cankers and attainment of liberation.

ontology—'doctrine of reality'; philosophical preoccupation with the question of what is ultimately real.

pantheism—a school of thought which subscribes to the view that God is in everything.

parakīyā—possessed by another.

Paramahaṁsa—the 'supreme swan', a symbol of an accomplished person, sometimes used as an honorific term for *gurus*.

pāramī, *pāramitā*—perfection.

prajñā (Pāli: *paññā*)—wisdom.

prakṛti—'nature'; the primeval creative force responsible for the manifestation of the populated universe through the interplay of its three constituents or *guṇas* ; it is the second principle in the dualistic system of Sāṅkhya philosophy.

pratītyasamutpāda (Pāli: *paticcasamuppāda*)—dependent origination; a chain of ten or twelve *nidānas* which explains, in Buddhist terms, the process of saṁsāric existence.

prema—love; ideal love.

preta (Pāli: *peta*)—a deceased one, a discarnate spirit; one of the six categories of beings in the Buddhist saṁsāric scheme (partly corresponding to the Christian idea of souls in purgatory).

puruṣa—person, spirit; the first principle in the dualistic Sāṅkhya system; since there are innumerable *puruṣas*, however, one can classify Sāṅkhya as 'pluralistic dualism'.

ṛṣi—seer; Vedic designation of accomplished or inspired poets, authors of the Vedic hymns; in the extended form *maharṣi* (Maharishi—great seer) in later and modern times used (and misused) as an honorific title for or by *gurus*.

ṛta—right, truth; cosmic law of balance incorporating both the natural and ethical laws.

rūpa—shape, form; bodily form.

sādhaka—adept; accomplished person.

sādhanā—personal spiritual discipline; a way to fulfilment.

Śaiva—pertaining to god Śiva; Śivaistic.

samādhi—a deep state of meditative absorption or concentration, sometimes regarded also as a state of higher cognition.

samatha—peace, quietude; in Theravāda Buddhism used to denote a type of meditation (*samatha bhāvanā*) leading *to jhānas,* but not necessarily to wisdom and liberation.

saṁsāra—'global flow'; an expression used mainly, though not exclusively, in Buddhism to denote the whole of manifested reality and in particular the fact of each being's beginningless and unceasing transmigration from life to life.

saṁskāra (Pāli: *saṅkhāra*)—lit. 'con-fection', it is usually translated as 'mental formation' and refers to unconscious dynamic tendencies and volitions such as instincts, urges, desires, also decisions and aspirations, all representing the fourth group of constituents of the human personality as taught by early Buddhism.

saṁśleṣa—embracing; embrace.

Sāṅkhya—one of the six recognized Hindu systems of philosophy which posits a multiplicity of *puruṣas*, all originally pure and free, and the creative force of *prakṛti* responsible for producing the manifested world and all things and beings with whom *puruṣas* become involved and falsely identified; when they realize their inner independence from the evolutes of *prakṛti*, they become free.

saṅnyas(a)—renunciation; a state of homelessness; a life style aiming at spiritual fulfilment; *saṅnyāsī* —a renunciate; mendicant; homeless wanderer.

Sarvāstivāda—an early school of 'Hīnayāna' Buddhism which subscribes to the view that the elements or constituents which combine to produce things and beings actually exist, while things and beings are impermanent.

Sautrāntika—an early school of Buddhism which split off from the Indian Sthaviravāda (Pāli: Theravāda), because it rejected *abhidharma* developments and regarded only the *sūtras* or discourses of the Buddha as authentic Buddhadharma. On the doctrinal side they accepted the

continuity of a kind of subtle consciousness from life to life (somewhat similar to the Theravāda notion of *bhavaṅga*).

siddhi (Pāli: *iddhi*)—magic or supernatural power developed in the process of training in Yoga or Buddhist meditation, sometimes regarded as an undesirable and potentially dangerous by-product.

śīla (Pāli; *sīla*)—morality; a set of ethical requirements in Buddhist training.

śiṣya—pupil.

śramaṇa (Pāli: *samana*)—wandering ascetic.

śūnyatā (Pāli: *suňňatā*)—emptiness; in Mahāyāna a crucial concept often used in the sense of the 'ultimate reality'.

svakīyā, sviyā—self-possessed, one's own.

Theravāda—the oldest surviving school of Buddhism rooted in Pāli Canon and further developed in its commentarial literature; although often referred to as Hīnayāna, it does not fit neatly under that heading; it comprises in germ or by tacit implication some important features of Mahāyāna doctrines.

trikāya—three bodies or levels of reality or truth in Mahāyāna: *dharmakāya; sambhogakāya*, the 'body of experience' or the truth as accessible to the enlightened mind; and *nirmāṇakāya*, the 'symbolical body' or the 'incarnate' truth as encountered in the person of a Buddha on earth.

turīya (also called *caturtha*)—the fourth state, a term used in some Upaniṣads and Vedāntic works for the accomplished state of consciousness in which final truth or conscious identity with the ultimate is realized; the other three are: the waking state, the dream state and the deep sleep state,

unio mystica—mystical union with God, the deity or the divine; this term may but need not imply monistic interpretation.

upadāna—clinging, grasping; a technical term, in Pāli Buddhism, for the personal force keeping together the five groups of the constituents of personality: *paňc 'upadāna khandha*.

Upaniṣads—philosophical and mystical writings included in the Vedic literature as its 'end' or closing part (hence Vedānta) and therefore regarded as having scriptural authority in Hinduism; fourteen to eighteen Upaniṣads can be regarded as Vedic in this sense; later ones are specialized writings and elaborations, some of them sectarian; Hindu orthodoxy accepts usually 108 Upaniṣads.

Vaiṣṇava—pertaining to god Viṣṇu; Viṣṇuistic .

vāsanā—indwelling impression, tendency; refers to traces of past actions and ties in a person's character.

Veda—lit. 'knowledge'; sacred scriptures regarded as revelation in Hinduism and composed of four Vedas or collections of hymns, Brāhmaṇas or 'priestly' treatises and Upaniṣads.

Vedānta—end of the Veda, i.e. Upaniṣads; the term is sometimes used, not quite correctly, for later-developed Vedāntic philosophy derived from the Upaniṣads.

vijňāna (Pāli: *viňňāna*)—consciousness, cognition, understanding; the fifth *khandha* in the Buddhist concept of the human personality.

Vijňānavāda—Mahāyāna school of philosophy regarding *vijňāna* as the substratum of reality in the absolute sense.

viśleṣa—separation, absence, bereavement.

vimutti—liberation.

vipassanā—insight; a faculty developed in the course of meditation and leading to final knowledge and liberation; in Theravāda Buddhism used to denote the type of meditation, *vipassanā bhāvanā*, leading to that achievement.

viraha—separation, absence, want, abandonment; separation of lovers.

Vīraśaiva—pertaining to devotional worship of Śiva as 'hero'; a sectarian movement of South Indian Śivaism, overlapping with Liṅgāyatism .

Vrātya—one bound by a vow (*vrata;*) designation for early, nonVedic, Indo-Āryan fraternities in the East of Northern India with a religious and spiritual tradition of their own, later brahmanized and codified in the AV.

Yogācāra—another name for the Vijňānavāda school expressing its stress on the development of consciousness through Yoga training.

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NOTE ON THE PAPERS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

‘Mysticism as Doctrine and Experience’ was presented at the Fifth Symposium in Holly Royde College in Manchester on 20 April 1979 and was published in *Religious Traditions, A Journal in the Study of Religion,* vol. 4, no. 1 (1981), pp. 1–18. Its editor, Ian Kessarcodi-Watson of La Trobe University, Australia (who died a few years later) was present at that Symposium. The article has been revised for this collection.

‘Mysticism and Indian Spirituality’ was delivered at the Sixth Symposium at the Cherwell Centre, Oxford, on 11 April 1980, published in *Studies in Indian Philosophy, a Memorial Volume in Honour of Pandit S.Sanghvi,* ed. D.Malvania & N.J.Shah, L.D. Institute of Indology, Ahmedabad 1981, pp. 241–56, and again in *The Scottish Journal of Religious Studies,* vol. 3 (1982), pp. 15–25; and revised for this collection.

‘The Longhaired Sage of RV 10, 136’ published here is a substantially revised version of the paper ‘Yoga in the Ṛg Veda’ read at the Second Symposium in Passfield Hall on 19 September 1976 and published as ‘Yoga and the Ṛg Veda. An Interpretation of the *keśin* Hymn, RV 10,136’ in *Religious Studies,* vol. 13, no. 3 (1977), pp. 289–302.

‘Mysticism in the Upaniṣads and in Śankara’s Vedānta’ was read at the Sixth Symposium on 11 April 1980 and is published here for the first time with minor changes.

‘Birth of Extraordinary Persons’ was read at the Fifth Symposium on 22 April 1979 and published as ‘A Note on the Buddha’s Birth Story’ in *Indianisme et Bouddhisme. Mélanges offerts à Mgr Étienne Lamotte,* Louvain-la-Neuve 1980. Included here is an edited version of the paper.

‘Consciousness Mysticism in the Discourses of the Buddha’ was delivered at the Fifth Symposium on 20 April 1979 under the title ‘Consciousness and Nibbāna in Early Buddhism’ and published as ‘Consciousness and Nibbāna in the Pāli Suttas’ in *Journal of Studies in*

Mysticism, vol. 2, no. 2 (1979). The version published here has been slightly revised and edited, with one substantial change to which attention is drawn in note 17.

'The Stages of Christian Mysticism and Buddhist Purification: *Interior Castle* of St Teresa of Avila and the *Path of Purification* of Buddhaghosa' was read at the Fifth Symposium on 21 April 1979 and is published here for the first time with minor editorial changes.

'Living Between the Worlds: *Bhakti* Poetry and the Carmelite Mystics' was delivered at the Thirteenth Symposium on 3 April 1987 and is published here for the first time.

'Yoga Philosophy and Jung' was presented at the Sixth Symposium on 12 April 1980 and is published without change for the first time in this collection.

'Three Contemporary Indian Mystics: Ānandamayī, Krishnabai and Rajneesh' was read at the Fifth Symposium on 22 April 1979 and is here published for the first time with the added note 8 supplemented by the editor's bibliographical note.

'Yoga, Mysticism and a Model of Comparative Religion' is a completely new version, or a further elaboration, of an idea contained in the paper 'Love and Meditation in the Indian Bhakti Tradition' presented at the Second Symposium on 20 September 1976.

The idea of commemorating the ten Symposia under the editor's convenership occurred also to the second convener who was quick enough to put together a collection of papers, thematically unrelated, before the intention of bringing out this volume with its theme became known. For this reason two papers delivered at the Fifth Symposium on mysticism found their way into the other collection: 'Mysticism in the Epics' by John L. Brockington (Department of Sanskrit, University of Edinburgh), and 'Metaphysical Knowlege in the Yoga Sūtra' by David Bastow (Department of Philosophy, University of Dundee). Both were published in: *Perspectives on Indian Religion. Papers in Honour of Karel Werner*, ed. Peter Connolly (Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica, no. 30), Delhi 1986, pp. 9–20 and 21–34, respectively.